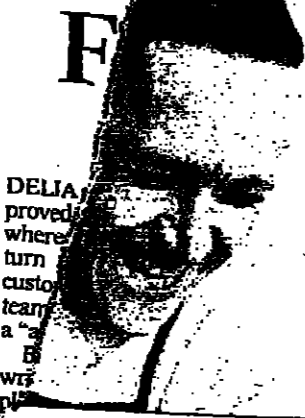


سكذ لمن ريميل

THE TIMES

SEVEN COLOUR SECTIONS: BRITAIN'S

BEST VALUE SATURDAY PAPER



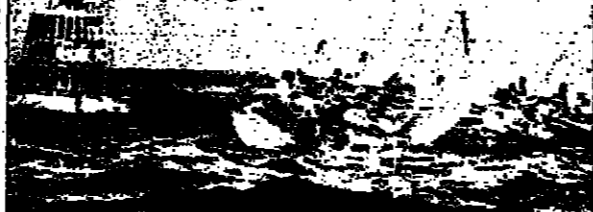
Men and menus

Robert Crompton on a bachelor cook course

the times magazine

Is Cowes Week sinking?

page 37



Hunting the puffin

WEEKEND 107326



maggie the FREE children's magazine



THE TIMES

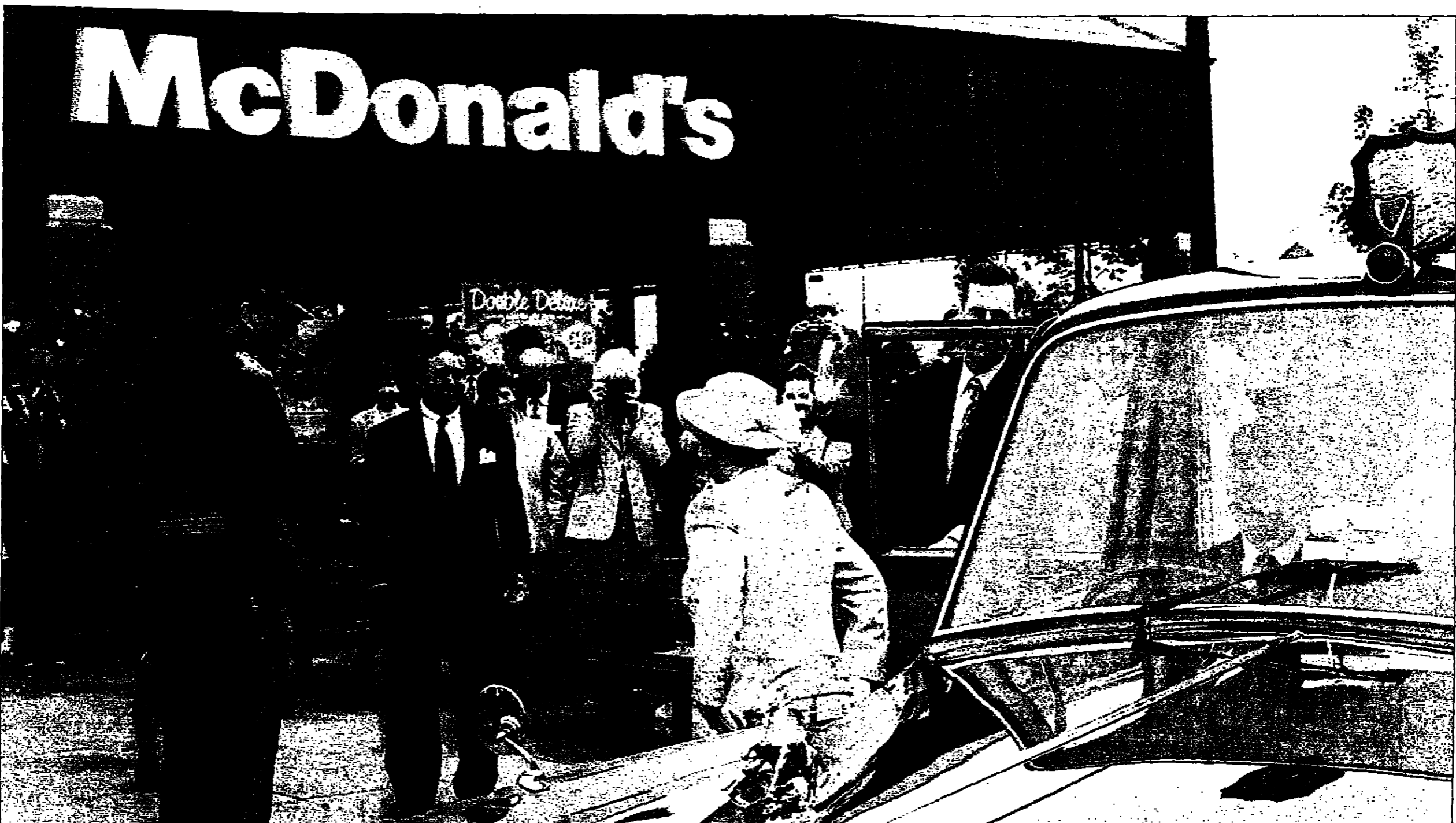
50p

No. 66,269

SATURDAY AUGUST 1 1998

http://www.the-times.co.uk

The people longed for a less remote monarch: yesterday they met her



The Queen meeting McDonald's staff during a window-shopping expedition in Ellesmere Port yesterday. She did not, however, succumb to the temptation of a burger and fries. Photograph: Colin Lane

THOSE determined to portray the monarch as a people's Queen could hardly have designed a more populist day out for her yesterday: she spent the morning in Ellesmere Port, shopping for kitchenware and a pair of trainers, sustaining herself with a visit to a drive-in McDonald's.

Alan Hamilton watches the Queen venture into a strange world of trainers and plastic washing-up bowls

more ordinary people in everyday situations and far fewer flunkies. As the royal limousine drew up outside the burger bar, there seemed a momentary danger that the Queen might have to go inside to learn the mysteries of Quarter-Pounders and Chicken McNuggets; but she was spared, and her visit was restricted to meeting the staff on the pavement outside. She looked a little glum.

Earlier the Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, had toured the nearby Blue Planet aquarium, the largest in Britain, to come face to face with a sand tiger shark; fortunately there was stout protective glass between them. The rest of her day, which included visiting a hospital and a power station, seemed deeply traditional by comparison.

at Sandringham with Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. The Queen thereby avoided a possibly awkward meeting with Camilla Parker Bowles, who with her two children was among a star-studded audience. St James's Palace would give no details of the play, but watchers at the gate saw the arrival, among many others, of the Duke of York, Prince Edward, the Princess Royal, King Constantine of Greece, and the actors Stephen Fry, Emma Thompson and Rowan Atkinson. The play was understood to be a spoof on the Blackadder television series, with the young princes playing leading roles. Whether the script involved a monarch in a burger bar remained a mystery.

Table with 2 columns: Category and Price/Value. Includes WEATHER, CROSSWORD, COURT & SOCIAL, LETTERS, OBITUARIES, SIMON JENKINS, THEATRES, BUSINESS NEWS, UNIT TRUSTS, SHARE PRICES, WEEKEND MONEY, SPORT.

Anti-corruption drive may free notorious criminals

By Stewart Tandler, Crime Correspondent

A GUN was planted on two of Britain's most notorious armed robbers to frame them for a post office attack, according to allegations being investigated by Scotland Yard's anti-corruption detectives. John Woodruff and Bill Hickson, jailed for 15 years apiece, are at the centre of the first miscarriage-of-justice investigation in the new drive by the Yard's CIB3 anti-corruption team. A week ago the detective in charge of their case was charged with stealing cash from a police property store.

Senior Yard sources say 200 cases involving detectives suspected of corruption are being investigated. They forecast that up to ten cases involving long jail sentences will have to be referred to the Court of Appeal, and say some defendants will be freed. Police must fear that even convictions properly achieved at great expense and skill could unravel in the fallout.

Bailey for conspiracy to rob post offices and robbing an east London post office. The convictions came after a year-long surveillance by Flying Squad officers. Police said that the two had been watched carrying out reconnaissance on post offices for a year and were thought to have taken part in 17 robberies worth up to £300,000. The two claimed in court that they were led into one robbery by a police informer. She proposed the attack and Woodruff and Hickson said they thought it was an "inside job". They alleged she gave them the real gun. The "informer" denied her role and the men were convicted.



Death of Bentley

"When you go to hang a boy of 19 years old, it does not matter that he is tall and broad-shouldered, for, at nine o'clock on the morning he is to die, he still looks only a boy." So wrote the hangman Albert Pierrepoint, above, in his newly discovered memoir of Derek Bentley's last hours. Page 16

Roads axed

More than two thirds of the Government's road-building programme have been shelved after a year-long review. Only 37 projects, including one in John Prescott's constituency and the M25 widening, will definitely go ahead in the next seven years. Nearly 90 have been cancelled or postponed. Pages 14, 15

Clinton in ebullient spirits

From Bronwen Maddox in Washington

BILL CLINTON yesterday shrugged off questions about his alleged affair with Monica Lewinsky, as legal threats to his presidency multiplied. The FBI laboratories set to work investigating whether a dark cocktail dress belonging to the former White House trainee bore semen stains from a sexual encounter with the President. And Paula Jones filed an appeal in a federal court to reinstate her sexual harassment case. Speaking from the White House Rose Garden Mr Clinton, laughing and looking optimistic, rebuffed a torrent of questions. "Everybody's got a question. Well, let me give you the answer to all of them," he said, palms raised against the clamour. But other than saying "I am looking forward" to testifying (on August 17), he gave no answers. Buoyant Clinton, page 10

Advertisement for Veuve Clicquot champagne. Includes handwritten text 'Vintage Moment Vintage Clicquot', a bottle of champagne, and the brand name 'Veuve Clicquot' with 'CHAMPAGNE OF THE SEASON' below it.



هكذا من الإهل

NEXT WEEK IN THE TIMES

MONDAY

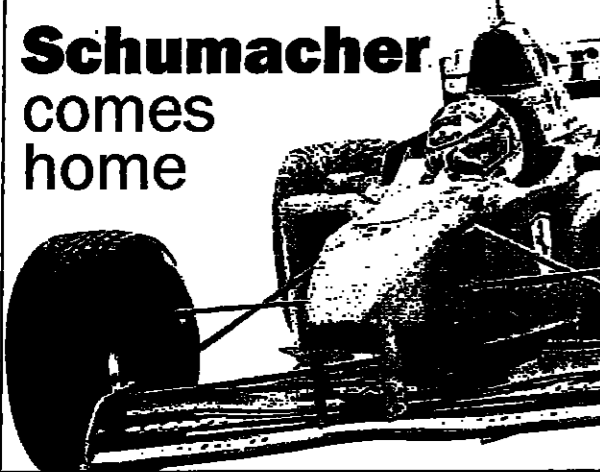
Sport on 13 pages



FOOTBALL FACTS, FIGURES AND FANTASY

Complete guide to every league fixture Enter Fantasy League and win a share of £100,000

MOTOR RACING THE GERMAN GRAND PRIX: Schumacher comes home



Bishops call for ban on ordination of gay priests

Report exposes depth of division in Church on issue of same-sex unions, reports Ruth Gledhill

CONSERVATIVE bishops at the Lambeth Conference yesterday called for a moratorium on the ordination of homosexuals and the blessing of same-sex unions.

The call came in the official conference report from the conference bishops studying human sexuality. It is seen as a serious blow to the homosexual lobby in the Anglican Church, and was immediately condemned by the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement as inflammatory and homophobic.

But no reference was made to setting up a Church commission to study homosexuality, even though the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, had personally endorsed the concept.

Most bishops are not prepared to bless same sex unions or ordain active homosexuals, and many want a moratorium on such practices, the report says.

The report shows the depth of divisions in the Church over the issue. "We must confess that we are not of one mind about homosexuality," the report states.

The report, entitled Human Sexuality, has been drawn up in secret after two weeks of

heated debate in closed sessions of the Lambeth conference, the ten-yearly meeting of 750 bishops and archbishops of the worldwide Anglican Church.

The section has been dominated by a split between Western liberals, some of whom, such as the Right Rev Jack Spong, Bishop of Newark in New Jersey, already ordain practising homosexuals and support same-sex marriages, and between Western conservatives and African evangelicals.

The conservatives had already succeeded in preventing a presentation to the section by a homosexual lobby group, Changing Attitude, who instead put the case for homosexual equality in the church at a conference fringe meeting on Thursday.

The report says: "Holy Scriptures and Christian tradition teach that human sexuality is intended by God to find its rightful and full expression between a man and a woman in the covenant of marriage, established by God in creation, and affirmed by our Lord Jesus Christ."

It continues: "Holy matrimony is, by intention and divine purpose, to be a life-



The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey

long, monogamous and unconditional commitment between a man and a woman." The report calls on earlier Lambeth conference resolutions, the New Testament and tradition to argue that remaining single and being celibate

are "Christ-like ways of living". The report does not explicitly list homosexuality as "sinful". For this category it reserves promiscuity, prostitution, incest, pornography, paedophilia, predatory sexual

behaviour, sadomasochism, adultery, wife battering and female circumcision.

"From a Christian perspective these forms of sexual expression remain sinful in any context," it says.

The report concedes that there are those who believe the Church should accept, support and even bless monogamous unions between people of the same sex.

However, it continues: "It appears that the opinion of a majority of bishops is not prepared to bless same-sex unions or to ordain active homosexuals. Furthermore, many believe there should be a moratorium on such practices."

The bishops admit that, in spite of praying, studying and discussing the issues, they are unable to reach a "common mind" on the scriptural, theological, historical and scientific questions raised. They call for the Church's primates, the 38 archbishops, to set up a means of monitoring any work done in the Anglican church on the issue.

The commission, backed by Dr Carey, would be along the lines of an earlier commission, chaired by the Archbishop of Armagh, Dr Robin Eames, which paved the way for women priests.

The report is expected to lead to one or two resolutions, to be debated by all 750 bishops and archbishops at the conference, at Kent University, Canterbury next week.

Anger as coastguard centres are closed

By Polly Newton Political Reporter

THE Government is to close 50 coastguard co-ordination stations despite strong opposition from staff and a warning by MPs that the move could jeopardise public safety.

Glenda Jackson, the junior Transport Minister, said yesterday that centres at Tyne Tees, Liverpool, Oban and Penland would be closed within three years and their functions transferred to other stations. The centres at Lee on Solent in Hampshire and Portland in Dorset will be merged by the end of 2003.

Ms Jackson said that the Government was investing between £5 million and £10 million in digital technology to replace outdated communications equipment. She said that the "greater capability" of the new equipment had made it possible to rationalise the co-ordination centres.

At a press conference, Ms Jackson angrily rejected suggestions that the closures were aimed primarily at saving money and said that they would improve the coastguard service. "It has to do with the saving of human life at sea."

About 70 jobs will be lost; coastguards patrolling beaches and helicopter rescue services are not being cut. The main concern of staff at the centres that face closure is that valuable local knowledge will be lost if responsibility for co-ordination is transferred to fewer centres.

Irvine is the last minister past post

By Valerie Elliott Whitehall Editor

THE Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg QC, was the slowest minister to respond to letters from MPs, according to official figures.

His department's deadline was 20 working days yet he received only 2,438 letters last year and managed to reply to only 74 per cent within the deadline.

Chris Smith, Culture Secretary, answered 78 per cent of letters within 18 days but only received 2,939 letters last year.

Ron Davies, Welsh Secretary, responded to three-quarters of his 2,998 letters within 15 days, but a year ago, 80 per cent of letters were answered within 12 days.

The figures were disclosed to MPs last night by Jack Cunningham, the new Cabinet Office "enforcer," who is shortly to issue new guidelines for Ministers.

The Chancellor, Gordon Brown, tries to write back within 15 days but out of just 4,533 letters from MPs, only 54 per cent were replied within the target.

Donald Dewar, Scottish Secretary, aims to reply within 17 days but last year only 65 per cent of his 4,722 letters from MPs made the deadline.

Harriet Harman, former Social Security Secretary, also took nearly three weeks to reply but her mailbag was huge - 17,585 letters last year - and she managed to answer just over a half within the 20-day deadline.

Full marks go to David Blunkett, Education and Employment Secretary, for his insistence that letters be answered within 15 days instead of 20 days. In the past year his postbag has swollen to 22,460 from the 16,774 recorded at the department in the previous year.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Blairs fly out for Italian holiday

Tony Blair will today put all thoughts of reshuffles, end-of-term reports and Cabinet splits behind him and head to Italy for the first stage of a three-week family holiday. They will spend two weeks in Tuscany before moving to southern France for a further week. Although an ever present entourage of communications systems and officials will keep Mr Blair in touch with Westminster, he is leaving John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, in charge.

Mr Blair will this morning fly to Bologna where he will hold talks with Professor Romano Prodi, the Italian Prime Minister, before an informal family lunch with the premier and his wife, Flavia, at a countryside restaurant.

Blairs beguiled, page 12

Straw wins Bill battle

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, last night appeared to have won a significant Cabinet battle by being placed in charge of the proposed new Freedom of Information laws. MPs and campaigners for new "right to know" laws feared the move was a ploy by Tony Blair to delay a Bill on freedom of information for at least another year, and water it down. Mr Straw has argued for a more restrictive right to information, particularly in regard to law enforcement agencies.

Politicians offer bail

A former Irish presidential candidate and a former Foreign Minister have helped to meet the £190,000 bail of Elaine Moore, 21, charged with plotting London bombings. Mary Banotti, Fine Gael MEP for Dublin and a family friend, told the Recorder of London, Judge Michael Hyam, that she would pay £20,000. A further £50,000 will come from Peter Barry, once a Fine Gael Foreign Minister. Bertie Aherne, the Irish Prime Minister, welcomed the bail decision.

'Porkies' check on labels

Pig farmers and their wives are starting a nationwide "label check" campaign to ensure supermarket chains indicate meat's country of origin. With 50 per cent of bacon and 16 per cent of pork now being imported, farmers fear the public cannot choose to buy British because of inadequate labelling. The strength of the pound is making imported meat cheaper, but farmers say there are higher standards of husbandry in Britain.

Leading article, page 19

Phone sales crackdown

The Government announced stringent measures to crack down on unsolicited telephone calls from double-glazing and encyclopaedia sellers (Nicholas Watt writes). People who do not want to receive telephone sales calls will be able to put their names on a register, which salesmen will have to consult before telephoning. Sending direct marketing faxes would also be banned, and companies could opt out of receiving faxes.

Miners' victory could cost taxpayers £500m

By Deborah Collicutt

THE Government has signalled that it wants an immediate settlement to compensation claims thought to be worth £500 million after a test case victory for nine miners yesterday.

John Battle, Energy Minister, pledged interim payments of £1,000 to those most seriously injured by the debilitating condition vibration white finger, but it is expected the final bill could be much higher.

He said about 3,000 miners, from an estimated 25,000 claimants, are due to receive awards in the next few weeks. "I fully sympathise with the many ex-miners who are suffering and have suffered, too

long, which is why it is imperative that we do all we can to agree arrangements rapidly - with the solicitors representing the plaintiffs so that we can begin settling valid claims."

The Court of Appeal ruled that British Coal, run since privatisation by the Department of Trade and Industry, was liable in all test cases and reduced the damages awards for pain and suffering to only two of the nine miners.

Three appeal judges said that British Coal, which challenged claims ranging from £5,456 to £50,546, should have warned miners to report symptoms as quickly as possible and carried out health

checks on the workforce. Vibration white finger, which is also known as Raynaud's disease, is a painful condition that affects blood circulation and interferes with the normal function of the hands. Symptoms include whitening of the fingers and hands, greater sensitivity to cold and restricted hand movements, caused by prolonged exposure to vibration, typically from pneumatic or other vibratory tools.

Only miners exposed to vibration before 1975 exclusively will now have a claim under the new rulings from an action started in 1991 that led to two High Court trials and two appeals.

Dixons Audio Show 98 FREE SPEAKERS WITH ALL SONY ESP2 CD PERSONAL HI-FI. Includes details for various Sony CD players like DE705 Blue, DE401 Silver, DE406C, and DE406K, with prices and features.

NEWS IN BRIEF: Irvine is the last minister past post. Includes details about Lord Irvine's response to MPs and other news items.

Blairs fly out for Italian holiday. Straw wins Bill battle. Politicians offer bail. 'Porkies' check on labels. Phone sales crackdown. Miners' victory could cost taxpayers £500m.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including "are barge", "overnme", "alth warn", "Jail for thi", "ended stu", "life of pro", "ing MP".

مركز من الإيجل

KIRI'S UNSUNG STORY



Kiri saw no harm in capitalising on her beauty. 'I like men,' she told one colleague. It was clear that her suggestive unattainability only added to her appeal. 'A lot of conductors had crushes on her. She would use that knowing that because Des, her husband, was there it couldn't go any further...'

Exclusive extracts from a revealing new biography of Kiri Te Kanawa

Drug smuggler is moved after escape fears

By Richard Ford HOME CORRESPONDENT

SANDRA GREGORY, the drug smuggler transferred to England from a Bangkok jail, was moved to a special high-security unit yesterday amid fears of an escape plot.



Gregory: she is now in a high-security unit

The move came after prison officers and senior prison staff studied intelligence gathered on Gregory in the four months that she has been in Foston Hall jail near Ashbourne, Derbyshire. Prison staff decided to move Gregory, 32, to H-wing in Durham prison, a high-security unit which also houses Rose West, the mass murderer. Previous inmates include Myra Hindley, the Moors murderer, and Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer, the IRA terrorists. Prison staff at Foston Hall, which re-opened last August to cope with the rising female prison population, have been keeping a close watch on Gregory, her behaviour and her mail for four months. Their suspicions had been raised by staff at Holloway jail, North London, who had watched Gregory since she returned to the UK in June 1997 after her transfer from the prison in Thailand.

Gregory sent her passport and items of jewellery out of Holloway in a move which although not against prison discipline, caused staff to be suspicious of her intentions. After she was transferred to Foston Hall, staff kept her under surveillance. They became worried after watching her talking frequently to a man who was apparently visiting a fellow inmate whom, it is understood, he did not know. In recent weeks she has also been sent an unknown amount of Thai and US currency. Foston Hall has also been hit by a series of false fire

alarms during the last week, leading staff to suspect that an escape attempt was being considered. Gregory, who has been a model prisoner since arriving back in the UK last year, spends her time fitness training and doing a computer course. The former teacher from Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire was arrested at Bangkok airport in 1993. She had been carrying 102 grammes of heroin in a condom inside her body. Gregory was tried in 1996 and initially faced the death penalty, but the sentence was commuted to 25 years in prison, and later cut to 22 years in an amnesty. She was returned to Britain under a transfer arrangement with Thailand. Gregory will lose no privileges as a result of her sudden move, but life in Durham will be more restricted than at Foston Hall. The wing has accommodation for 48 high-security prisoners and includes a textile workshop and an activity centre where women can make soft toys, and do knitting and pottery. There is a separate gym and Gregory will be allowed 30 minutes of outdoor exercise each morning and afternoon, plus two hours in the evening.



John "Chainsaw Woody" Woodruff, left, and Bill "Mad Dog" Hickson disguised as old men during a robbery

Unlikely suspects for wrongful arrest

FEWER candidates are less likely for a miscarriage-of-justice investigation by Scotland Yard than Bill "Mad Dog" Hickson and John "Chainsaw Woody" Woodruff. Several generations of detectives have spent more than 30 years putting them behind bars rather than trying to set them free. Between them Hickson and Woodruff, both from East London, have been sentenced to 60 years in prison for multi-million-pound robberies and even Hickson's lawyer admits his man is a professional thief. Now they are at the centre of an investigation by anti-corruption officers into allegations that they were framed.

Police look into possible framing of two old lags, writes Stewart Tandler. Woodruff could have been ideal targets for what senior officers call "noble-cause corruption": bending the law to convict criminals. Woodruff is now said to be ill in prison and has had psychiatric problems. But in his day he was one of a breed of "blaggers" who struck across London. In the 1960s he was jailed for 12 years for armed robberies with sawn-off shotguns. He was jailed again in 1979 for 18 years for his part in the notorious Banstead robbery in which an armed gang waylaid

a security van, cut into it with a chainsaw and stole more than £1 million. He was also jailed for 14 years for another robbery in the Blackwall Tunnel when a van was hijacked. Hickson was jailed for 12 years in the 1960s for armed robberies. He was arrested after the £6 million robbery on Security Express's East London depot in 1983. Hickson was accused of handling cash from the robbery. He was jailed for six years and then disappeared from sight. Other underworld figures thought that both he and Woodruff must have retired. Although the pair fought the armed robbery charges at the heart of the current investigation, both men did admit they were still living off crime. But instead of high-value robberies, they claimed they were handling stolen clothes.

Horrific reign of sex-abuse family

BY SIMON DE BRUGSLIES. EIGHT members of a family who sexually abused and tortured their children for years were jailed yesterday for crimes a judge described as "wickedness beyond belief". In the most extensive case of family sex abuse to reach the courts, two grandparents, three of their grown-up children, two in-laws, and a cousin were convicted with a neighbour of 29 serious sex-crimes, including 41 rapes of children aged between three and 15.

The grandfather who orchestrated assaults on at least four of his seven children and four grandchildren was jailed for 25 years. His wife got 14 years. Three of their children who had been abused and went on to do the same to their own families were also jailed with two of their spouses. The abuse involved more than a dozen children and some were hired out to strangers for weekends.

The sentences totalling 100 years were handed down at the end of three trials in the West Country. Judge William Taylor banned identification of the court or the county to protect the anonymity of the victims, who include five children now in care. One police officer involved in the investigation said: "This was like Fred and Rose West but without the murder." The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children said it is dealing with 300 children a year who have been subject to organised sex abuse. The charity's director, Jim Harding, said: "Victims in this case were trapped behind a wall of silence for more than 30 years. In all that time nobody saw clearly enough, nobody listened hard enough, nobody offered enough help."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Retired BR man denies war crimes

A retired British Rail worker is to stand trial for the alleged murder of four Jews during the war. Anthony Sawoniuk, 77, of Bermondsey, southeast London, pleaded not guilty to crimes a judge described as "wickedness beyond belief". In the most extensive case of family sex abuse to reach the courts, two grandparents, three of their grown-up children, two in-laws, and a cousin were convicted with a neighbour of 29 serious sex-crimes, including 41 rapes of children aged between three and 15.

Huntsman jailed

Anthony Kirkham, 53, a farmer from Ridley, Cheshire, who kicked a member of the League Against Cruel Sports in the face at the Cheshire Hunt and took his £1,000 camera, was jailed for 15 months by Mold Crown Court.

Ruling stands

The Court of Appeal has confirmed a decision by an industrial tribunal that Karen Wade, a police officer at Holbeck, West Yorkshire, had not been subjected to victimisation and discrimination by male colleagues.

Silverware stolen

Silverware from the 17th and 18th centuries has been stolen from a church at Terrington St Clement, Norfolk. Some of the items were given to the church by Dr John Newcome, master of St John's College, Cambridge, in 1743-54.

Crew played on

The pleasure boat Notingham Princess was stranded for four hours with 93 passengers on board when she ran aground on a stolen car dumped in the River Trent. The crew played the theme music of the film Titanic.

S registration: 1 wealthy owner

BY ROBIN YOUNG. DRIVERS are going SILLY over the last annual registration prefix letter, which hits the road today. The S prefix has already brought the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency in Swansea a windfall of £12 million, with 28,000 registrations sold since they went on sale on June 1. Sales of "select registrations" are up 20 per cent on last year's R prefix, despite an increase from £250 to £399 for each set of personalised plates. The DVLA has retained the plates with the most obvious popular appeal for public auction in its "classic collection" range. A sale to be held in Swansea on September 11 and 12 will feature SIANS, to spark a bidding war among Welsh ladies. The choice also includes SARAH, SIBYL, SINDY and SAILOR. SIMONS will have to wait for a later date: the DVLA does not believe in selling all its plums at once. Personalised plates are expensive. The current auction record is the £231,000 paid for KINGS in December 1993. IA sold for £200,000 in December 1989 and IRR for £106,000 in December 1994. ELVIS and NIGEL are among plates that fetched £75,000. Since its introduction in December 1989, the sale scheme has raised a total of £325 million. Henceforward there will be two new prefixes a year, starting with T in March next year followed by V in September.

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST ELECTRICAL STORES. Cunnys. SALE. FURTHER REDUCTIONS NOW ON. Includes sections for Fridge Freezers, Dishwashers, Cookers, Televisions, Nicam Video, Camcorders, and more. Prices range from £179.99 to £1199.99.

Viagra tab... sized in S... bookshop

criticise... arrests

ant to get... loan... only... APR?

PLUS A HUGE CHOICE OF FURTHER REDUCTIONS IN-STORE. WATCH OUT FOR OUR VOUCHER SPECIALS! HOW IT WORKS... ORDER HOTLINE 0500 304 304. APR 29.57

NORTHANTS PRESS AGENCY

Viagra tablets seized in Soho bookshop raid

By DEBORAH COLLCUTT

The first seizure in Britain of Viagra, the anti-impotency drug, has been made at a bookshop in Soho, London. Fourteen boxes containing 60 tablets were recovered. Before the raid, officials from the Medicines Control Agency made a test purchase, acting on a tip-off from a Westminster council worker who had spotted a sign advertising the drug in the shop window.

The agency returned on Thursday with council officials and the Metropolitan Police to raid the premises. A spokesman for the council said: "This is, as far as we know, the first seizure of its kind in this country. The drug has not as yet been licensed; it will be available only by prescription from GPs or hospitals."

Viagra was launched in America three months ago and has already been used there by more than two million men. The officials from the agency, run by the Department of Health, paid £40 for a single pill matching Viagra's distinctive blue, diamond shape.

A 38-year-old man was questioned, but not arrested. About 80 unlicensed videos and CD-Roms were also seized in the raid, which was

attended by Scotland Yard's Obscene Publications Squad. The council spokesman added: "The drugs appeared to be bona fide supplies of Viagra, bearing the maker's name, though obviously we will have to have them tested to confirm they are the real thing before any prosecution can go ahead."

Kevin Gardner, chairman of Westminster council's licensing sub-committee, said the authority would come down hard on those trying to peddle the drug illegally. It has reportedly been sold already to nightclubbers in the South East.

The Department of Health confirmed this was the first raid in which a quantity of illegal supplies of Viagra had been seized in Britain. A spokeswoman said it was the first time premises had been raided and an entire supply of the drug seized: "If the MCA visits a supplier and finds that somebody is selling Viagra, they are asked to stop selling it, but remain under investigation."

The bookshop manager, who declined to be named, later claimed that Viagra was widely available on the black market. "Viagra is all over the place. You can get it in Soho.

We just had the nerve to put a sign in the window."

He said he had been selling Viagra for £40 a tablet, and added: "I could get more at the click of a finger, by the lorry load. I take it. My mum and dad are driving round with smiles on their faces. Yes, I gave it to them. It's a recreational thing."

The manager, who is married with a two-year-old daughter, said it was easy to import the drug. A friend in Tenerife had managed to buy the tablets at his local chemist and had mailed them to England.

He had received his first shipment two weeks earlier and claimed to be selling the pills at 100 per cent profit. He said he was unaware he was breaking the law. "If I had thought it was illegal, we wouldn't have had the poster in the window."



Raymond Southall

Search grows for missing boy, 7

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

HOLIDAYMAKERS joined about 100 police officers yesterday in the search for a seven-year-old boy missing near Northampton.

Police and civilian search and rescue teams combed the 235-acre Billing Aquadrome, where Raymond Southall disappeared about 2.30pm on Thursday. He was last seen by



Police search for the missing seven-year-old at the Billing Aquadrome, where he was last seen on Thursday

his father cycling away from a lake on his black bicycle.

Police yesterday questioned up to 1,000 people at the site. Dogs and a helicopter joined police cars patrolling the sites and surrounding villages. Late yesterday the search was extended to a quarry south of the camp.

Raymond, who was on holiday with his parents, grandparents and two sisters, had

left his father at Lily Lake on Thursday to fetch a fishing rod from the nearby caravan where his grandparents, Raymond and Gillian Southall, were staying.

The search for the boy, who comes from West Bromwich, did not start for nearly two hours because his parents and grandparents each believed he was safely with the others. His parents, Dean and Sharon,

both 31, searched on foot, and his grandparents drove about 45 miles looking for him before alerting the police about 7pm.

Yesterday his mother cried as she said: "It has been a nightmare. Everything goes through your mind." His father, a steelworker, was said to be too distraught to talk.

Police said last night they were very concerned for his

safety, but did not think he had been murdered.

Raymond, who speaks with a Birmingham accent, has cropped blond hair and an inch-and-a-half scar in the centre of his forehead.

He is 3ft 10in tall and was last seen wearing blue jogging bottoms and a blue top with grey sleeves and a hood, a yellow T-shirt and white "England" trainers.

al arrest

... saw ... robbery ... was ...

... in the ... robbery ... was ...

... on ... robbery ... was ...

... and then ... robbery ... was ...

... he and ... robbery ... was ...

... at ... robbery ... was ...

... off ... robbery ... was ...

... handling ... robbery ... was ...

NEWS IN BRIEF

Retired BR man denies war crimes

... of worker ... during ...

... during ... during ...

... during ... during ...

... during ... during ...

... during ... during ...

... during ... during ...

... during ... during ...

... during ... during ...

Man jailed

... a farm ... also ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

ing stands

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

... of the ... of the ...

ware stolen

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

ew played on

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

istration: thy owner

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

... and ... and ...

Judges criticise 'public' arrests

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

POLICE inviting the media to raids and arrests during criminal inquiries causes unjustifiable distress to those under investigation, a High Court judge said yesterday.

Lord Justice Rose said that the media's presence was more likely to impede investigations than "encourage witnesses to come forward."

Home Office guidance on such matters, given in 1982, has lapsed. Lord Justice Rose said: "The sooner that up-to-date guidance on relations between the press and media is given to police forces by the Home Office, in consultation with the Association of Chief Police Officers, the better."

He said that, "save in exceptional circumstances", it did not seem to be in the public interest for the media to attend the execution of search warrants and interviews with suspects which might involve innocent people.

He called for new guide-

lines as he gave judgment in the case of a London shopowner who said that he was humiliated on television during a search for illegally held stuffed animals.

Lord Justice Rose, sitting with Mr Justice Bell, dismissed an application by Robert Scare about a raid on his shop in North London last March. The judges ruled that, although the raid caused them disquiet, there was no illegality or impropriety.

About 30 police officers, accompanied by reporters, television film crew, RSPB officials and campaigners against the trade in wild animals were present. Since the raid Mr Scare has received a stream of hate mail and paint thrown at his shop.

Alan Jones, QC, for Mr Scare, said the stuffed animals were confiscated "in a blaze of deliberately contrived national publicity" which was distressing and disgraceful.

UP TO 50% OFF SELECTED WRIGHTON KITCHENS.*

(OFFER ENDS 11TH AUGUST.)

PLUS FREE CANDY MICROWAVE
worth £395 when you spend over £700 on Candy appliances.

PLUS FREE CANDY DISHWASHER
worth £425 when you spend over £4,000 on Wrighton kitchen units or half-price when you spend over £2,000.

PLUS FREE DELIVERY
We'll even plan your kitchen with you and deliver it free to your home.

PLUS BUY NOW AND PAY NOTHING UNTIL 1999
You don't have to pay anything for 6 months, not even a deposit!***

EXPERT INSTALLATION SERVICE
Our installation service offers professional fitting for your kitchen, including plumbing, gas and electricity.

WRIGHTON KITCHENS ARE AVAILABLE AT SELECTED HOMEBASE STORES. FOR SHOWROOM DETAILS TELEPHONE 0645 801 800.

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE

HOMEBASE

www.homebase.co.uk MONDAY-THURSDAY 8AM - 8PM • FRIDAY 8AM - 9PM† • SATURDAY 8AM - 8PM • SUNDAY 10AM - 4PM††

24.9% APR variable

*Opening times may vary. Certain stores open until 10pm Monday to Friday. †Stores in Scotland open Sunday 9am-5pm, certain other stores open 11am-5pm. Please call 0645 801 800 during office hours for details of your nearest store. **The kitchens included in this promotion are: 50% off Berwick Premier Carcase, 30% off Monaco and Oslo Premier Carcase, 20% off Andover Classic Carcase. The fully fitted ranges in this promotion are 30% off Venice Premier Carcase, 20% off Ludlow Premier Carcase and include installation. Fully fitted kitchens are subject to survey, additional work such as tiling, additional sockets, plastering, lighting and old kitchen disposal are not included. Full details available in store. ***Candy integrated Dishwasher model DW160 costs £625 when purchased separately (excludes fascia). Candy built-in Microwave model CMW25 costs £395 when purchased separately. ††In January 1999 pay in full or take credit. Written quotations on request from Homebase Limited, Beddington House, Wallington, Surrey SM6 0DH. Homebase are licensed credit brokers. Loans subject to status and approval and are not available to anyone under 18 years, minimum qualifying spend £350. Example: A kitchen costing £1,500. Pay in 36 monthly repayments of £57.42. Total amount repayable £2,074.32 (24.9% APR variable). Spend & Save Cards cannot be used on kitchen purchases. Products and offers may vary in N. Ireland and Eire.

Want to get A loan at only 12.5% APR?

It's easy. At Phone A Loan our very attractive fixed rate of interest makes it easier for you to budget and plan ahead. For example, with such a low rate you could borrow £5,000 for only £88 per month - repaid over 45 months (APR 12.5%) - which means you'll only have to pay £6,215.85. And it won't cost you anything to make a lump sum, or early repayment. With Phone A Loan you decide how much you want to pay, then you can choose either how much you want to borrow (anything up to £15,000), or how long you want to take to pay the loan off (from 12 to 60 months). So, if you're over 18 years of age with a good credit history, try us. Call Phone A Loan Monday to Friday 8.30am to 9.30pm, weekends 9am to 6pm.

PHONE A LOAN
Call now 0800 138 68 98

Call may be monitored for self-protection purposes. Rates correct as of 27/7/98 and within quotation are available on request. The APR and repayments may vary depending on the loan period and loan amount. Loans are subject to credit assessment and your ability to meet repayments. Yorkshire Bank PLC. Registered No. 127425 England. Registered Office: 20 Marston Way, Leeds LS2 9MZ. Yorkshire Bank TIM037

50 من الاجل



A cutout photograph of Mick Jagger, with additions, is among the collection

Experts divided over 'Francis Bacon' cast-offs

500 works remain locked away while the argument over authenticity continues, reports **Dalya Alberge**

The art world is divided over the authenticity of a collection of 500 works said to be by the modern master Francis Bacon.

Michael Peppiatt, Bacon's biographer, is among those who believe they could be fakes and would like to see more evidence of their provenance. Other Bacon scholars, such as Dawn Ades, Professor of Art History and Theory at the University of Essex, regard the works as fascinating. However, as Bacon's estate will not comment, the collection remains in limbo.

Barry Joule, 43, a Canadian who says he was Bacon's chauffeur, handyman and friend for 14 years after he repaired the artist's television aerial, claims that he was given the works to dispose of, but could not bring himself to do so. Since the artist's death six years ago he has kept them in a bank vault, where they remain while the experts argue over their authenticity.

Some are published in *The Times* today for the first time, before being shown tomorrow on Channel 4's *Art House: The*



Bacon: said he did not do preparatory sketches

Other Francis Bacon. Remy Blumenfeld, the programme's producer, says that Mr Joule offered to donate the works to the Tate Gallery, and that, after a show of initial excitement by David Sylvester, the world's foremost Bacon scholar, and others who were shown the material privately at the gallery, "suddenly, the door shut and they didn't want the stuff". Mr Blumenfeld says that Mr Joule received a letter from Mr Sylvester saying that "despite my initial enthusiasm, I am among those who

do not see Bacon's hand in this work".

The collection includes dozens of photographs from magazines and newspapers that have been worked on. The images range from cyclists and boxers to a portrait of Mick Jagger over which outlines of figures have been rehearsed. What concerns the doubters is that Bacon, famous for capturing the pain and bleakness of human existence — always insisted that he did not do preparatory sketches, suggesting that his creativity was spontaneous.

Mr Joule claims that one of his duties was destroying works with which Bacon was not satisfied. He said that the artist passed them to him with the words, "You know what to do with them." Realising their importance, he felt unable to carry out Bacon's wishes.

Mr Joule is bitter at the art world's treatment of his collection. "Who else did it? He didn't have a school or pupils, and didn't work with anybody. I am despondent. The door has been shut in my face over this stuff. The estate has been very unhelpful all along. My



Another of the disputed "Francis Bacon" works

theory is that the estate is worried I might sell them off piecemeal, thus lowering the price of Bacon's paintings."

Mr Blumenfeld wonders who would have faked paintings that do not look like recognisable Bacons. "Faking provenance is harder than taking the paintings."

David Lee, the editor of *Art Review* magazine, said: "The

Tate has now lost out. They were offered the most important archive of any 20th-century British artist, an archive that was going to rewrite what we know about Bacon. It is devastatingly interesting material."

The Tate denied that it had been offered the collection. Neither the estate nor Mr Sylvester could comment.

Who is that masked man? It's a gay skater

ICE-SKATERS in the Gay Games are saying they will wear masks when they compete in same-sex partnerships after being threatened with expulsion from their ruling body, the International Skating Union, for taking part.

The homosexual version of the Olympics is being staged outside North America for the first time since it began in 1982. The organisers claim a record 15,000 competitors will take part in the Amsterdam Games, which start today.

In spite of 16 years of activity, the gay sporting movement has made little impact on mainstream sport, with only a handful of the world's top athletes having come out as homosexuals or lesbians. They include Ian Roberts, an Australian rugby league forward, and Justin Fashanu, the former Nottingham Forest striker who hanged himself this May while on the run from police for allegedly sexually assaulting a teenage boy.

Greg Louganis, the four-times Olympic diving gold medalist, was spurred to greater achievement when nobody in his team wanted to share a room with him because he was homosexual. When he hit his head on the diving board at the Seoul Olympics in 1988, he failed to tell the doctor who treated him that he was HIV-positive because he feared ejection

Prejudice is marring the Gay Games and competitors' futures, Dominic Kennedy reports

from the contest. He came out at the 1994 Gay Games in New York.

Among the 580 members of Team UK, the British squad that is sponsored by the satellite station Gay TV and the condom brand Durex, there is a mood of anxiety. Several international athletes fear that, if they are identified, they will lose sponsorship or distress their families. Some have switched sports to avoid upsetting their own discipline. A lesbian in Team UK, who competes in athletics for her country, has decided to play soccer instead of performing in the track and field section. She can be anonymous because only her team name will be known. Uniquely for a sporting event, the list of competitors is secret. The Gay Games gets little coverage in the mainstream sports media, although BBC Radio 5 Live will report it. Sue Emerson, Team UK

sports co-ordinator, is bidding for the gay soccer world cup to be held in London in 2000 to help to give players the confidence to disclose their sexuality. "Don't tell me none of the footballers in the league is gay," she said, "but would you want to run on to the pitch with everybody knowing?"

Chris Morgan, 25, a former rugby union hooker for Leicester and Wasps, who became openly homosexual after a knee injury ended his career, will lift weights in Amsterdam. "It's very difficult to actually come out in a team atmosphere," he said.

Ice-skating has faced the most difficulty. Along with dancing, participants will perform in same-sex couples. The International Skating Union has refused to recognise the gathering as an official event, so skaters, referees and officials who take part in the figure skating contest will be expelled from future competitions.

The European Gay & Lesbian Sporting Federation has called on the participants to skate wearing face masks in protest. "This is proof of the still-existing homophobic atmosphere within the regular sport associations and organisations, where they scrupulously stick with conservative opinions without taking into account the ever-changing world outside," said a statement.

The Link

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST CHOICE OF MOBILE PHONES

OVER 50 MOBILES IN-STORE

PAY AS YOU GO WITH 'UP-2-YOU'

JUST BUY VOUCHERS TO MAKE CALLS

- NO CONTRACT
- NO MONTHLY BILLS
- NO CREDIT CHECKS

DIGITAL MOBILE PHONE
• 99 name and number memory
• Up to 300 minutes talktime/70 hours standby
Model: MOTOROLA MEMPHIS Was £129.99†

SAVE £10[†] PACKAGE PRICE
£119.99†

ONE YEAR VALUE PACKAGE

INCLUDES 90 MINUTES OF CALLS EVERY MONTH

- PACKAGE INCLUDES**
- 12 MONTHS LINE RENTAL (Worth £210)
 - CONNECTION FEE (Worth £35.25)
 - DIGITAL MOBILE PHONE
 - Built-in hands-free facility - talk and drive safely
 - Up to 135 minutes talktime/120 hours standby
- Model: NORTEL NEVADA

SAVE £65[†] PACKAGE PRICE
£179.99††

EMERGENCY USE

EXCEPTIONAL BATTERY LIFE

NOKIA DIGITAL MOBILE PHONE
• 5 different ring tones
• 99 name and number memory
• Up to 210 minutes talktime/100 hours standby
Model: 1620 Was £19.99*

SAVE £10[†] PACKAGE PRICE
£9.99*

TALK AND DRIVE SAFELY

BUILT-IN HANDS-FREE FACILITY

NORTEL DIGITAL MOBILE PHONE
• Voice dial - enables you to call preprogrammed numbers by speaking into the handset
• Compatible with the new Precept Service
• Up to 180 minutes talktime/120 hours standby
Model: 2000 Was £99.99*

SAVE £20[†] PACKAGE PRICE
£79.99*

FREE
MOBILE CHOICE BUYING GUIDE
AVAILABLE IN-STORE NOW!

MOBILE CHOICE
FREE

Communications made easy

EXPERT ADVICE

Our expert staff are specially trained in all communication products including Cellnet, One 2 One and other networks. We will be happy to help you make the choice that's right for you.

GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICES

If you find exactly the same package cheaper locally within 7 days, we will refund the difference.

136 STORES NATIONWIDE

FREEPHONE 0500 222 666

For your nearest store or to order direct

one 2 one

Come in-store and we'll tell you about the free call options available on One 2 One including **FREE** Local Weekend, Evening or Daytime Calls*

NEW ONE 2 ONE PRECEPT SERVICE

ERICSSON DIGITAL MOBILE PHONE
• Compatible with the new Precept Service
• Small and stylish with protective flip mouthpiece
Model: PF768

SAVE £50[†] CREDIT ON YOUR SECOND BILL WHEN YOU SWITCH TO PRECEPT SERVICE (SEE 0500 222 666)

Plus £35 for Connection
£99.99*

The Link

World Offers.
Flight prices from:

- Jersey £69 rdn
- Guernsey £59 rdn
- Cork £80 rdn
- Amsterdam £79 rdn
- Zürich £130 rdn

TAXES INCLUDED

Travel by 30 September '98.

For thousands of World Offers call us now on **0345 222111**
Book by 5 August '98.

WORLD OFFERS BRITISH AIRWAYS
The world's favourite airline

*Fares are return from London Gatwick and subject to availability and travel periods. Includes pre-paid taxes correct as 30 June '98. For details see RTV Television p.380, your travel agent, British Airways Travel Shop or book and pay at our web site: www.british-airways.com. Flights operated by the independent carrier CityFlyer Express Limited.

*When you connect to One 2 One for 10 minutes, line rental starts from £12.50 per month. †When you connect to One 2 One using your Local Numbering Plan, when you connect to One 2 One, there are no contract or Precept One 2 One. Double tariff your local emergency services calls are One 2 One. Free calls are subject to One 2 One for the day. ††The number connected, a minimum of £20 has to be credited every 90 days in order to make and receive calls. †††When you connect to One 2 One Precept tariff and receive connected for a minimum of 30 minutes, offer ends 02/08/98. *When you connect to One 2 One all in one package, double compared to paying monthly £2 + £12.50 + £20 + £35 for connection + £20. Connection to mobile phones is subject to status. A deposit may be applied. Ask brokers for details. Part of DSG Retail Ltd

FRIDAY AUGUST 1998

masked
ay skater

9.00
59.00
79.00
30.00

drive responsibly off-road.

THIS YEAR WE'VE REALLY CLEANED UP.



1998 is Land Rover's 50th birthday, so a few good wishes were certainly in order. A few? Thanks to the launch of the Freelander, the accolades came in droves. Among the many, Autocar handed over their "Design and Production" award for features like the retractable tailgate glass, which drops completely at the touch of a button when you've parked too tight to open the door. And other innovations, like the unique Hill Descent Control, made What Car? Magazine's "Off-Roader of the Year" award something of a formality. But it was the Freelander's on-road ability which really caught the judges' eye: the integrated chassis and independent suspension moved What Car? to say that no other vehicle was "quite as complete as Land Rover's all purpose 4x4". Well, after

that, what could they do but hand over the big one: What Car? Magazine's "Car of the Year"? However, this is no elitist winner, but a people's champion. The Freelander is available as a 3 or 5 door, petrol or diesel. With a standard 12,000 mile service interval,** full 3 year warranty,* starting price of £16,570 on the road, and a range of finance options, What Car? were moved to conclude: "What really impresses is the way it lets you have it all!" For more information on the "Car of the Year" visit your local dealer or call 0800 110 110. We'll also throw in a copy of Land Rover's Essential Guide to Choosing and Using your 4x4 Vehicle.** Free, of course. After all, giving is as good as receiving.



THE BEST 4x4x4

*Warranty is for 3 years or 60,000 miles, whichever occurs first. No mileage limit in first year after purchase. Subject to manufacturer's terms and conditions. **Subject to availability. *Typical service intervals apply to 4x4. All finance and leasing facilities are subject to applicant's status, available to pay via only banknotes and cheques. May be required without conditions available via request from Land Rover Financial Services, a trading division of Rover Financial Services (RF) Ltd, International House, Kidderminster Lane, Birmingham, B37 7YU. Certain business users may be excluded.



AUTOCAR



Auto EXPRESS



In the frame: the Queen with Julie Thompson, a rock singer, at Buckingham Palace in April; and, yesterday, visiting a kitchenware shop and, with the Duke of Edinburgh, an aquarium at Ellesmere Port, Cheshire

BY ALAN HAMILTON

Queen adds colour to negative image

THE Queen came face to face yesterday with a sand tiger shark, one of two frightening species with which she is having increasingly close encounters.

Pictures of the monarch touring the Blue Planet aquarium at Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, the largest in Britain, and subsequently at a drive-in McDonald's, are the result of a conscious effort by Buckingham Palace to give the Queen

a better press by allowing photographers to capture livelier and more informal pictures of her.

The Palace realised over a year ago that newspaper and television pictures too often portrayed her as stiff, formal and inanimate. Viewers and readers were, they concluded, in danger of assuming that

she never smiled or took her hair off. Since May, cameramen have been given much freer access to her in the hope that her image, at least some of the time, will become more human and friendly.

Royal visit planners now try to place the Queen in photographic situations to get away from familiar shots of her

shaking hands or receiving posies, which increasingly fail to make the papers.

Palace officials insist that plans to reshape the royal image were under discussion before the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. They concede, however, that the subsequent clamour for a more "people-friendly" monarch

unblocked some of the more reactionary Palace ears, including those of the Queen.

In a separate six-month experiment, which is likely to become permanent, photographers from the Press Association are allowed access several times a week to capture the Queen at work — and occasionally at play — at

Buckingham Palace or Windsor Castle.

One of the first successes was a widely published picture of the Queen, clearly enjoying herself, talking to a pink-haired female rock singer — the first to perform in Buckingham Palace — at a reception during the European-Asian economic summit.

The appearance of Tony Blair in the background is no accident: he and his wife dreamt up the function.

In the past, cameramen would have been restricted to a position outside the door or at best admitted for only the first five minutes of a function. At the Queen's request, the intimate work is often given to

two of the agency's female photographers.

Palace garden parties now have photographers mingling with the guests. In the past, the only camera position was on the roof, which offered only general shots of the crowd below.

The Palace is also about to expand its website on the Internet, and will shortly launch a monthly electronic news magazine, including many of the new press pictures.

Tycoon with caring touch joins Prince

BY NICHOLAS WOOD

A BUSINESSMAN who invites young heroin addicts, prostitutes and violent offenders for holidays at his home was appointed yesterday by the Prince of Wales to head the Prince's Trust.

William Castell, 51, becomes chairman of the trust, which spends £40 million a year to help deprived young people to gain qualifications, find work and start businesses.

Mr Castell declined to talk about his personal efforts to help young people, but his friends said that each year he invited a group of eight or nine young people from an unemployment blackspot in the Welsh valleys to spend a week with his family.

One said: "Some have been in prison, some are prostitutes. Others are heroin addicts. Bill drives them around London and lets them stay in his home."

"He takes them to Brighton, to see the sights, gives them a picnic in Hyde Park or takes them to a West End show. He also persuades them to sit around a table at dinner and enjoy a conversation, rather than slumping in front of the TV."

The young people come

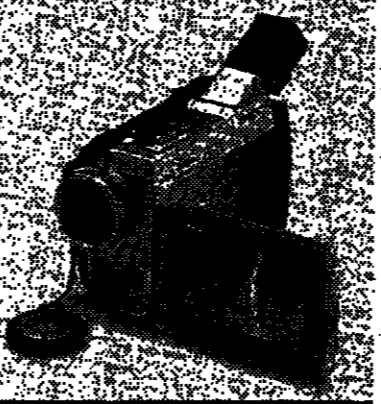
from the isolated hill village of Penrhys, in the Rhondda Valley, where the unemployment rate is 95 per cent.

Mr Castell, chief executive of Nycomed Amersham, a healthcare company with a turnover of £1.4 billion a year, was chosen by the Prince from a short list of three captains of industry submitted by trust officials. His chief tasks will be to oversee the management streamlining of the organisation and to expand its work with deprived people aged from 14 to 30.

Mr Castell gave a warning yesterday that, unless businessmen faced up to their social responsibilities, Britain would go the way of the United States, where, he said, the rich turned their homes into fortresses surrounded by barbed wire. "There is a great responsibility on us. If we become too roughshod in maximising earnings per share, at some stage society will say, 'You cannot do this.'"

Mr Castell first met the Prince on a visit to Penrhys in 1993. They have worked closely since and Mr Castell helped to set up a scheme to tackle the village's social and economic problems.

Nightsheet is a feature that lets you film when there's absolutely no light. The images are recorded digitally and viewable on a 5.5 inch LCD screen. The TRV9 also has Stearns technology which lets you record for longer to see in the dark, see your Sony DeLUX



FREE LINE RENTAL FOR YOUR FIRST 2 MONTHS

2P PER MIN

FREE FIRST 2 MONTHS LINE RENTAL

FREE 20 MINUTES OF CALLS PER MONTH

FREE ERICSSON GA628 DIGITAL PHONE

FREE PORTABLE HANDS-FREE KIT WITH 20% DISCOUNT

FREE LEATHER CARRY CASE & IN-CAR ADAPTOR

FREE NEXT DAY DELIVERY

FREE 30 DAY PRICE OF RING GUARANTEE

ERICSSON GA628

• 30 hour battery
• 3.2 hours talk time
• Compact and lightweight

vodafone

0800 00 00 77 DIAL-A-PHONE

Hamptons
Day court
 Clintons

Campus

life

no-cl
bo

0500

JAMES BONE'S NEW YORK



Hamptons pay court to Clintons

THE well-heeled colony of devoted Democrats that populates the string of beach resorts known as the Hamptons throws down the red carpet this weekend for its favourite President, oblivious to his mounting legal woes.



Bill Clinton's arrival for three days of "R&R" has the celebrity-obsessed enclave on the eastern end of Long Island abuzz with anticipation. For weeks, his various hosts have been making up their A-lists. With an estimated \$1 million (£609,000) in Democratic Party fund-raising at stake, it's strictly the "survival of the richest".

The First Family was expected to bed down at Steven Spielberg's sprawling "Quelle Barn" compound in ritzy East Hampton. That would enable the T-shirted film director to outdo his performance of last year, when his high-profile house guest was Oscar-winner Tom Hanks. Sandwiched between the Atlantic and Georgia Pond, Spielberg's home offers the secret service the latest in security, since the director was himself recently the target of a deranged stalker. Jet-set aficionados expect water sports to be banned on the adjacent cove.

The actor-politico Alec Baldwin and his wife Kim Basinger are also lending their home in nearby Amagansett for a \$1,000-a-head garden party tonight (with discount \$250 tickets available for the hoi polloi who are willing to watch from afar). Among those planning to be in attendance are Robert De Niro, who is battling the local council for the right to enlarge his father's house. Since the invitation was issued in the name of the non-existent "Democratic National Committee's Saxophone Club" there has been rampant speculation that the sax-toting President will pick up his instrument to accompany local hero, Billy Joel.

Also planned for the Clintons was an intimate \$25,000-



Golf buddies Bill Clinton and Steven Spielberg. The President is expected to stay at the film director's home

a-couple dinner for 60 chez Bruce Wasserstein, the investment banker, and possibly a second, even more exclusive meal at the home of certified "Friends of Bill", Alan and Susan Patrick. It is Mr Patrick, a venture capitalist and a frequent guest for bed and breakfast at the White House's Lincoln Bedroom, who is getting the kudos for bringing Mr Clinton to town. The last time Mr Clinton visited the East End of Long Island was as Governor of Arkansas in 1988 when he umpired the annual "artists and writers" softball game.

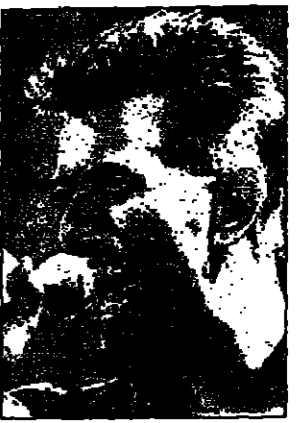
"They'll probably read a book and go for a walk on the beach," Mrs Patrick says. "I've heard the President has specifically mentioned golf and more golf."

The President's daunting difficulties with Monica Lewinsky should evaporate for just long enough for him to concentrate on the pressing problem of where in the Hamptons to play a decent round with his clubs. White House aides say Bill wants to squeeze in at least two trips to the course. But the stuffy Maidstone Club is being a stick-in-the-mud by refusing to cancel its annual members' tournament, and the First Golfer will have to swing elsewhere (probably at the Atlantic Golf Club that Mr Patrick helped found). Bill and Hillary have also made arrangements to drop by a local rare book dealer (no first editions of Leaves of Grass please), and a nearby shopping mall has offered to open early tomorrow morning to allow Chelsea a private buying spree.

Not all the local worthies will be jettisoned in for the presidential visit, however. Ron Perelman, perhaps the Hamptons' most ubiquitous party-goer, has reportedly headed off to the Spanish island of Ibiza for the summer. For the President, that may be just as well. It was Mr Perelman's Revlon cosmetics company that was going to employ the lonely hearted Miss Lewinsky—until the offer was revoked because of the White House sex scandal.

Bowie brought down to earth

DAVID BOWIE'S ambition to provide Internet access through his own BowieNet has run into a little difficulty with a horse-and-buggy rider in Maryland.



Bowie: website niggle

Although Bowie's Internet service provider will be found at www.davidbowie.com, his projected company name is already taken by Bill Bowie's www.bowie-net.com, which promotes the American sport of harness racing. "I'm getting a lot of publicity, which I would have had to pay an arm and a leg for," the horseman says. He is ready to sell out, but has not yet been contacted.

The advent of professional women's basketball in New York has proved a liberation for the city's lesbians. Just as the city's male celebrities pack the stands for the New York Knicks, lesbians are flocking to Madison Square Garden to watch Liberty, New York's team in the Women's National Basketball Association. It has become the

place for gay women to see and be seen. Just as much fun as the game is the half-time break, when binoculars come out to spot who else is in attendance. It's unclear how the players feel about their fans' attentions, but they know they're there. One fan held up a sign proclaiming: "Hey, Lesbian Fans are packing your stands."

US works make an entrance

THE flagship show of America's Public Broadcasting Service, Masterpiece Theater, is abandoning its reliance on recycled British product and will, for the first time in 27 years, present television adaptations of American literary masterpieces with American actors. Once presented by Alistair Cooke, the weekly drama slot had long offended American viewers with its Anglophile agenda, and was in danger of losing the sponsorship of Mobil.

Among the first American novels to be adapted for the small screen will be Willa Cather's Song of the Lark and Henry James's American.

Building on another plane

BRITISH AIRWAYS' giant model of Concorde in Times Square is being blamed for the so-called "Curse of Conde Nast" afflicting the magazine empire that includes Vogue and The New Yorker. Scaffolding at the new Conde Nast building collapsed last week, killing an elderly woman and closing the Crossroads of the

World to traffic for almost a week. Now an expert in feng shui, the traditional Chinese science of how buildings channel energy, has blamed the misfortune on the fact that the tip of Concorde is pointing at the accident site. The developer has pointed out that the model was not there when the building was designed.



The model of a BA Concorde blamed for bad feng shui over Times Square



Campus capers

THE venerable New York University is outraged by a pornographic Internet site that claims to offer a secret spy camera where female students "ramp for your enjoyment in their own dorm room".

Last parents fret about their teenage daughters, the university has filed suit against the operator of "NY University Dorm Cam" for abusing its trademarked name and symbols—including the NYU logo on the women's tank-tops and the university pennants decorating their supposed dormitory.

"There is no 'NYU Dorm Cam' installed in any NYU dorm room," the suit says, calling the idea that its serious-minded students would parade in various states of undress for Internet voyeurs a "false scenario".

Vertical sidebar with various advertisements including 'FREE LINE BELL FOR YOUR 2 MONTHS', '2P', and 'FREE'.

Life cover advertisement with 'no-claims bonus' and '£10 a month' offer. Includes contact number 0500 600 900 and a form to request more information.

Continental advertisement featuring a large image of a tire and the slogan 'INTEGRITY IS LIKE A MAN WITHOUT A SOUL.' and 'A TYRE WITHOUT ENGINEERING'.

Clinton 'happy about testifying to grand jury'

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

IN A confident and emphatic declaration, President Clinton told America yesterday that he was "looking forward to the opportunity in the next few days of testifying" about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky, the former White House trainee.

"No one wants this matter behind us more than I do, except perhaps the American people," he said, looking relaxed and upbeat in the White House Rose Garden as he announced new evidence that the booming economy was almost unscathed by the Asian crisis. Repeating "Wait!" seven times, with hands raised, he brushed off a storm of questions about his alleged affair with Ms Lewinsky.

He would give evidence "completely and truthfully" to the grand jury, he said. "I am anxious to do it," he added, but dismissing all further

questions, he said: "I hope you can understand why in the interim I can and should have no further comment."

Mr Clinton's demeanour was in sharp contrast to predictions that the investigation by Kenneth Starr, the independent prosecutor, poses a new, grave threat to his



presidency. All eyes in Washington are now on the FBI laboratories, which set to work yesterday analysing a dark cocktail dress belonging to Ms Lewinsky. They may be able to tell as early as this morning whether it contains traces of semen.

Mr Clinton did not know that the former White House trainee had given the dress to Mr Starr when he agreed to give evidence before the grand jury on August 17, reports yesterday said.

With every sign that Mr Clinton will stick by his denial of any affair, political commentators said he had been "blindsided" by the sudden appearance of the dress and could have been lured into a dangerous legal trap. For Mr Starr, the dress could provide undeniable physical evidence of a sexual encounter.

If Mr Starr can prove that



President Clinton signals "enough is enough" as he refuses questions yesterday

the affair took place, he would have achieved at least one of his goals: trapping the President into committing perjury in front of a grand jury, an offence that could justify the start of impeachment hearings. But he would still have to prove the more serious offences of obstructing justice or inciting others to lie.

As the FBI picked over the dark fabric yesterday, speculation grew about whether the President would agree to provide physical specimens to allow genetic comparison.

If the dress does contain stains, it will still take until at least Tuesday to establish whether the traces are substantial enough to allow DNA

analysis. It would then take a further week to map any DNA sample.

The President would then come under intense pressure to give specimens of his DNA through blood samples or swabs from inside the cheek. Experts were divided yesterday about whether he would be obliged to comply.

Swap of babies discovered three years after birth

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

TWO three-year-old girls have been found to be living with the wrong mothers as a result of being switched in a maternity ward shortly after they were born. Police have been called in to investigate after a genetic test on one of the girls revealed that she had no biological link to the woman who had brought her up.

The University of Virginia Medical Centre, where the girls were born in June 1995, said that its security measures would have made it extremely difficult for the two to have been accidentally mixed up and so a criminal investigation was launched.

Three DNA tests conducted on the blonde, blue-eyed daughter of Paula Johnson, 30, disclosed that they were not related. A hospital investigation found that the woman who appeared to be the girl's mother was bringing up Ms Johnson's real daughter.

The second mother, who had given birth at about the same time on June 30, was contacted, and similar tests

performed on the girl she has cared for revealed the truth. The second woman's identity has not been disclosed.

Ms Johnson, who has engaged a lawyer, said that she hoped to meet the other mother and her real daughter but was uncertain at this stage what she hoped would happen then. "She's a beautiful child. She's a wonderful child. Ms Johnson told the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* of the girl who knows her as mother. "I don't want to scare this other family in any way."

Cynthia Johnson, her lawyer but no relation, said that only a meeting with the other family could resolve the bewildering situation. "We are really hoping the other parents out there will come to us and help us work through this together," she said.

The hospital, in Charlottesville, said that its procedure in the maternity ward, in which babies and their mothers are assigned identical identity bracelets, precluded accidental switches.

No need to be Italian to join the Mafia

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

IT IS no longer necessary to be a full-blooded Italian to be a "made member" of the Mafia, say federal prosecutors.

Lawyers for John Gotti Jr, the son of the jailed "don" John Gotti Sr, claim he cannot be a racketeer, fraudster and loan shark who ran New York's notorious Gambino clan because he has a part-Jewish mother. The Mafia, they argue, is as strict about bloodline as any European royal house.

The prosecutors have produced a 15-page letter to Judge Barrington Parker Jr showing the Mafia is no longer so ethnically exclusive. Until the Second World War, mafiosi had to be "100 per cent Sicilian", then non-Sicilian Italians could be included. Now the labour shortage that has hit the city's crime syndicates means it is not necessary to prove you are full-blooded Italian.

Certainly Mr Gotti Jr has lost his cultural moorings. His father wore only the best silk suits — handmade in Little Italy — but "Junior" wears red nylon tracksuits and blue baseball caps. And he cannot speak Italian.

DiCaprio brings joy to injured gymnast

A TEENAGE Chinese gymnast, who may be paralysed for life, was visited in hospital by Leonardo DiCaprio, star of the film *Titanic* (Tunku Varadarajan writes).

Sang Lan, 17, broke her neck when she fell on her head during a practice vault before the Goodwill Games here last week. The first words she uttered after regaining consciousness following an operation was "DiCaprio". Ms Lan asked to watch a video of *Titanic* and also said that it would be her "dream" to meet Mr DiCaprio.

On Thursday night she had her dream come true when DiCaprio walked into her room. He spent about 20 minutes with her.



DiCaprio: dreamboat

Give water. Give life. Give £25.

Every single day, 25,000 children die in developing countries because of dirty water. In the time it takes you to read this paragraph, another three vulnerable youngsters will have lost their lives.

Yet a gift of just £25 from you today can help WaterAid bring a whole family a supply of safe water that can last for years. Your gift could be the difference between life and death. Please use the donation form today — and please change life for good.

Will you change life for good?

Complete the form below and send it straight to WaterAid, Freepost (SW1844), Prince Consort House, 27-29 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7YY.

Please accept my gift of £.

I enclose a cheque/postal order/CAF voucher(s) made payable to WaterAid.

I'd like to make my gift by MasterCard/Visa/CAF CharityCard No.

Expiry date / Signature

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr PLEASE PRINT

Address

Postcode

Tel: (home/work)

WaterAid will not pass your name and address to any other organisation.

Registered Charity No. 282759. 0171 793 4526

24-hour credit card hotline: 0171-793 4526



Everyone promises to undercut BT's basic international rates. So do we.

Save up to 43% on calls day or night with BT.

For just £1 per country per month, BT's Country Calling Plans

give you 25% off calls to that country.

You can choose up to five countries from our list of over

100. Add PremierLine and Friends & Family discounts

to save 43% on up to six nominated numbers.



See how much you can cut off your BT phone bill — with BT.

Freefone 0800 001 800.

COUNTRY CALLING PLANS ARE FOR CUSTOMERS MAKING CALLS COSTING 25 OR MORE PER MONTH TO EACH COUNTRY CHOSEN. NOT AVAILABLE ON BT CHARGECARD CALLS. PREMIERLINE COSTS 50 PER QUARTER AND IS FOR CUSTOMERS WITH CALL BILLS OVER 245 PER QUARTER.

Cartoonists with the

Heard rosary worldly the heaven's gate

Handwritten signatures and scribbles at the bottom right of the page.

Cartoonist has fun with the Führer

A Hitler comic is attracting Germans who do want to mention the war, writes Roger Boyes

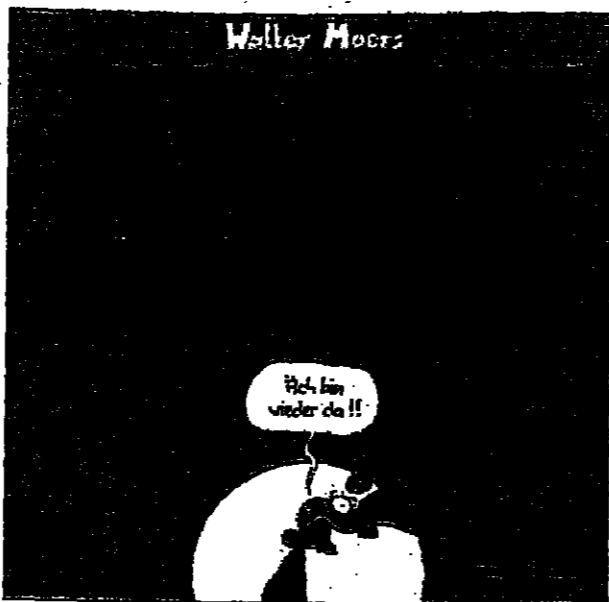
SHOULD Germans make fun of Adolf Hitler? A new fast-selling comic book entitled *Adolf* is putting this idea to the test, wallowing in bad taste but also raising a few furtive chuckles from a nation which has been taught to treat the Führer as the last great taboo.

Walter Moers, the cartoonist, says he picked up a Japanese Hitler comic while visiting America and thought: If they can do it, so can I. The result is a wild, often obscene fantasy. Hitler did not commit suicide in his bunker — he lived in the sewers for decades, pondering his mistakes (I should have attacked Russia from the flank), until eventually he is offered an amnesty and he can surface in the 1990s.

Confused by signs advertising McDonald's and kosher food, he visits a psychiatrist who orders him to keep a Tamagotchi, the demanding child's toy. Hitler, who reads the Made in Japan label, lets the Tamagotchi die. "Why do I have to destroy everything I love — my fatherland, my Tamagotchi?" he weeps in a consultation with the doctor. The psychiatrist prescribes sex. Hitler travels to the Hamburg red-light district and is surprised to encounter Hermann Goering, now a transsexual prostitute thanks to the American Witness Protection Service.

Goering, too, faked his suicide and was taken up by the CIA. "I had to do them a few favours ... kill Kennedy ... Martin Luther King ... Malcolm X ... It was a good time ... and then the political climate changed and they dropped me."

Goering introduces Hitler to the drug crack and the Führer rapidly becomes addicted. To support his habit he goes to Paris, buys the Eiffel Tower from a confidence trickster and to earn some ready cash becomes a bodyguard. The story becomes more and more unhinged and draws in Diana, Princess of Wales, extraterrestrials (who want to mate Hitler with Mother Ter-



Walter Moers

sa to produce the perfectly balanced human) and a destructive trip to Japan. The humour lies partly in the transcription of Hitler's Austrian dialect and in his rare moments of reflection. The psychiatrist (who turns out to be more crazed than the Führer) suggests Hitler could, for therapeutic reasons, launch another war. "Ah," thinks Hitler, "it might be nice to have another go. On the other hand, where's the challenge? Been there, done that."

"Tastefess," says a spokesman for the central board of the German Catholics which will not be recommending the book to its flock. There is no denying that verdict. Adolf Hitler is depicted playing Monopoly and he lands on Beethoven Street. "I'll buy that! I'll build a concentration camp there, er, I mean a hotel." Is that funny? And if it raises a smile from British readers, should it also prompt amusement from Germans?

"It is difficult to call this work politically incorrect," says Michel Friedmann of the Central Council of German Jewry, "if you accept the premise that Hitler can be the subject of satire in the manner of Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, raising a bitter laugh but also leaving something stuck in the throat."

In context then, it is permissible to make fun out of Hitler; Charlie Chaplin did it, so did Ernst Lubitsch in *To Be Or Not To Be*.

Art Spiegelman's *Maus* attempted to tell the story of the Holocaust in comic strips and some German schools have even experimented with a comic-strip biography of Hitler.

In *Adolf*, Hitler is a pathetic

figure and not even the most bone-headed neo-Nazi could find something inspirational in the book. The book is offensive, full of smut and silliness, but that is largely the point. Germans have become

fed up with "not mentioning the war". Other nations, notably the British, make fun of the Nazis, and the Germans are beginning to feel confident enough about themselves to do the same. To laugh at Hitler is not the same as condoning his crimes. Without saying as much, Walter Moers seems to agree. The attraction of writing a comic strip about Hitler, he says, is that he is so easy to draw. His introduction shows the six basic components of Hitler's face and says: "Try it yourselves."

In a Bournemouth bookshop yesterday the responses to the book ranged from slight amusement to loud complaint. Most booksellers are tacking the book away in corners or even under counters.

Even so *Adolf*, which came out in early summer, is already in its third print run. Walter Moers is expecting not only brickbats from the critics but also more explosive protests. "In future I will be opening thick packages with a broomstick."



Cartoon storylines — top left: In *Nazis on Mars*, Hitler and Goering take a trip into space to find the Jews are there already, in the shape of a stallholder selling kosher falafel. In *Time-travel*, above left, he finds that his time capsule has taken him back to the 1940s, but has difficulty in pinpointing exactly where he is, with Stalingrad in the background. In *Wheel of Fortune*, above right, he is left to ponder what the missing letters



might spell out. After going through various meaningless possibilities, he concludes, "I just can't get it." In *Summer of Love*, top right, he is left pondering, "How can I make out with one of these hippie chicks." Walter Moers, the cartoonist, has created a bizarre world in which Hitler did not commit suicide, but lived in the sewers for decades, pondering his mistakes, until he is offered an amnesty and surfaces in the 1990s.

The book is full of smut and Hitler appears pathetic

b² re-writes the

Saving on the Stock Market is only for the rich.

Not any more it isn't. b² wants to give all savers easy access to the stock market. You can open your Advanced Savings Account with as little as £500. Or you can be a regular saver, putting in anything from £50 a month. And don't worry about tying your money up either, because you can get at it whenever you want.

Saving on the Stock Market is risky.

Not any more it isn't. The Advanced Savings Account from b² includes a clever device called 'Stockmarket Protection,' that's guaranteed by Barclays Bank. This means that you'll get back every penny you put in if the stock market is down at the end of the 3, 5 or 7 year period you've chosen to have your savings protected with b². And if it's up (which is more than likely) you'll get back everything you put into the stock market, plus all the gains. What's more, these can be tax-free.

Saving on the Stock Market is complicated.

Not any more it isn't. b² has made the whole process of investing in the fortunes of Britain's top companies easy and uncomplicated. Our lines are open 8am - 10pm, seven days a week. We'll be happy to answer any questions you have. We won't baffle you with jargon. And we'll be totally open about our charges. So call us for an information pack now.

The Advanced Savings Account from b².



For a pack call us, or send coupon to b², Freepost SE44934, Kingston-Upon-Thames, KT2 6BR. NAME: FIRST NAME SURNAME ADDRESS POSTCODE TELEPHONE B0716

b² Limited is an Appointed Representative of Barclays Funds Limited (BFL) and only offers their unit trusts: Stockmarket Protection from Barclays Bank plc (BFL) and Barclays Bank regulated by IMRD and the Personal Investment Authority. You cannot rely on past performance to predict how your investment will perform in the future. Future performance will be reduced because of the changed basis of taxation introduced by the 1997 Finance Act. The price of units and the income they pay can go down as well as up. Money used for protection will not grow. At least 85% of money put in guaranteed on early withdrawal. Current tax treatment of PEPs is assumed. Calls are recorded.

'Credit card' rosary gives worldly the key to heaven's gate

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

JEWELLERS in Milan have come up with an idea designed to appeal to modern-minded Roman Catholics who want to combine prayer and contemplation with a busy lifestyle: a rosary shaped like a credit card.

La Stampa said the credit card rosary, unlike the traditional string of beads for aiding prayer, could be put in a wallet next to bank and credit cards, identity cards and driving licences. The cards, measuring about 3in by 2in, will bear embossed points corresponding to the beads of a rosary, so that the busy but devout can say their Hail Marys and Paternosters or contemplate the Christian mysteries discreetly, "while travelling on a train or plane, or even attending a business meeting."

Rosaries were unknown in early Christianity, and are said to have been the idea of St Dominic (1170-1221), founder of the Dominican Order. Paintings often depict him holding a rosary, although some scholars believe the attribution of the invention to him is erroneous.

A spokesman for the Milan Jewellers' Association said the concept of the credit card rosary was "part of an overall attempt to bring Roman Catholicism into line with modern times for the

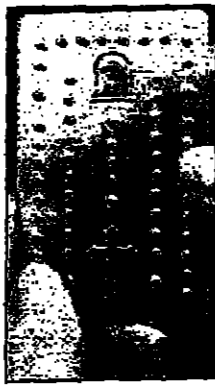
millennium ... it will enable people to stop and pray in the middle of our frantic world." The card comes in various forms: plastic for "those who can afford to pay the least", brass or copper-embossed cards for middle-income earners, and a de luxe version in gold studded with diamonds.

The project is said to have the approval of the Vatican. "It's a case of insert your card and invoke the Virgin Mary," La Stampa said, but adding there was a danger that some users "might come to think they can enter the Gates of Heaven by punching in their personal identification number."

Religious commentators said that although the concept appeared to "reconcile worship of God with Mammon", it was not clear how it squared with the Pope's recent utterances on rampant commercialism.

Before going on holiday in the Dolomites recently to escape the heat of Rome, the Pope published an apostolic letter entitled *Dies Domini*, in which he deplored the growing practice of opening shops and conducting business on Sundays, and urged believers to reserve at least one day for God alone by "observing the Sabbath."

The rosary card will be available in Britain from the end of next year.



Slimline beads

of babies... red three... after birth... DiCaprio brings joy to injured gymnast... change me for good

Blairs beguiled by Tuscany

Italians bemused by British love affair with dusty province, writes Richard Owen

TONY BLAIR today leaves behind rows over welfare reform and his Cabinet reshuffle to arrive in San Gimignano with his family for their third consecutive Tuscan summer holiday. Many Italians are delighted that the Prime Minister is so loyal to a region whose attractions include Florence, Siena and Pisa. But others are baffled by his, and his wife Cherie's, attachment to the "Tuscan myth".

"What is it about Tuscany that the British find so attractive?" *La Repubblica* asked this week. "Is it simply that they are keen to escape the rainy shores of the British Isles for the joys and the wine of Chianti?"

Tuscany, some local residents say, is hot and dusty, and suffers from water shortages. Local workmen tend to be dour and truculent, and the undergrowth is alive with poisonous spiders and snakes.

"It is also claustrophobic," a local artist who will be a neighbour of the Blairs told me as we sat by her pool. "There are too many expats who don't bother to learn Italian, have cornflakes delivered by the lorryload and import English newspapers. A lot of marriages go to pieces on these hills." As for relaxation, "Tony can play tennis with his coach Bruno, and Cherie can



The 50-room Tuscan villa owned by Prince Girolamo Strozzi where the Blairs will arrive today for their two-week summer holiday

sunbathe topless, but there is not much for the children to do except swim up and down the pool. Tuscany is a bit didactic for kids — everywhere you look is another lesson on history or architecture."

For the past two years the Blairs have stayed on the estate of Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, just outside San Gimignano. Because of political embarrassment over inquiries into

Mr Robinson's tax and business affairs it had been thought that the Blairs might have tactfully steered clear of Tuscany this year. But instead they are staying a few miles down the road at Cusona on the 1,200-acre estate of Prince Girolamo Strozzi, who comes from one of Tuscany's most aristocratic dynasties.

The Strozzi's 50-room Renaissance villa — which the Prince, his Russian-born wife Irina and their two daughters are vacating — comes with a pool, tennis courts, and infinite supplies of Vernaccia, the Strozzi's fragrant white wine, made for summer drinking. Nevertheless, *La Stampa* asked: why didn't Mr Blair do what sensible Italians do and get away from the overpowering heat (currently 36C, or 97F) by heading for the seaside or the mountains?

Part of the answer lies in the breathtaking Tuscan landscape, which has worked its seductive magic on the north European imagination since Renaissance times. Many Renaissance masterpieces have a beguiling Tuscan background of walled towns, cypress trees, olive groves and rolling vine-

yards. Michelangelo was a native Tuscan, as was Dante. Then there is the wine.

The list of celebrity residents includes Princess Margaret; the Duchess of York; John Mortimer (said by some to have invented the term Chianti); Sting; Dame Muriel Spark; Lord Lambton; Paul Smith, the designer; Lord Gilmour; and Matthew Spender, the sculptor and son of the late poet Sir Stephen Spender.

But as Spender says, the heyday of Chianti was "20 or 30 years ago". The Tuscan cult derives from Byron and Shelley, who fled there in the early nineteenth century. But the modern version goes back to the mixture of aristocrats, artists and 1960s "drop-outs" who emulated the Romantic exiles by escaping to the Tuscan hills.

For many Britons, says Spender, Tuscany is "an idea, not a place". His own restored eighteenth century farmhouse near Siena formed the backdrop for Bernardo Bertolucci's film *Stealing Beauty*, starring Liv Ullmann and Jeremy Irons, which also featured Spender's sensuous sculptures. But the

film's depiction of lazy, sexually charged Bohemian life by the poolside, he says, reflects an expat Tuscany "which existed decades ago — if it ever existed at all. Bertolucci's film was a dream of innocence. People are pursuing a dream which has nothing to do with the realities of the land."

Spender's perceptive book



Within Tuscany, focuses instead on the Tuscany of craftsmen and artisans with whom he works, and which he says is under threat. "Contrary to its upmarket image, Tuscany is a region where it is tough to earn a living from the soil, which is one reason why it has a strong communist tradition. It is the last refuge of the old-

fashioned belief that there is a working class, and that capitalism owes it a living."

"It is hardly surprising that poor smallholders are only too glad to sell a roofless cowshed with rotten floorboards and no drainage for inflated prices to British or American expats chasing the 'Tuscan dream,' another resident said.

As Spender and other residents acknowledge, some will suspect that talk of the Chianti "myth" is a ploy by those who live the dream to put others off, in the hope that Tuscany's exclusivity will return. Expats point out that

although John Mortimer's 1988 Chianti novel *Summer's Lease*, written while he was staying in a villa near Siena, gave explicit descriptions of the water shortages and the truculent left-wing workers, readers preferred to focus on his account of the art, the vineyards and the Medici palazzos.

Despite the grumbling, the only prominent Chianti resident who has left the area is Germaine Greer, who sold her property near Cortona eight years ago and has not, so far, returned.

Mercenaries 'no substitute for the SAS'

Ken Connor, an SAS veteran, criticises 'quick-fix' operations by private armies

THE arms-for-Africa affair, and the role played in it by Sandline International, have given the clearest signal to the Government that mercenaries cannot effectively carry out clandestine operations with or without authorisation. As a former member of the SAS who served in the regiment for 23 years and saw service in four theatres of war, I know from experience that this elite British Army force is the only one that should be used for such operations.

Despite all the fuss about Sandline's provision of arms for the overthrow of the military junta in Sierra Leone, most people will consider that the restoration of the democratically elected President Kabbah to power was both morally right and beneficial to Britain's interests.

However, leaving such intervention to a private military company is an abdication of responsibility when in the SAS Britain has the ideal professional, and politically accountable, force to mount such an operation. Lieutenant-Colonel Tim Spicer, who runs Sandline, had an impressive career in the Scots Guards and developed formidable contacts during a spell as a staff officer at SAS Group Headquarters.

Although well positioned in SAS politics, he never served with the regiment in any operational capacity and his comparative lack of full understanding of the intricacies of the insurgency and counter-insurgency operations is shown by strategic flaws.

The most revealing example of the flaws in Sandline's methodology came last year when it was called in to help to overcome rebels in Papua New Guinea. The focus of the planned operation was Panguna, the site of the world's largest copper mine.

The Bougainville Revolutionary Army attacked Panguna in 1989, forcing it to cease

operations. The mine has never reopened and its ten-year closure has cost the owner, Rio Tinto, and the Papua New Guinea Government hundreds of millions of pounds.

The plan Colonel Spicer formulated had one aim only: to seize and reopen the Panguna mine. To that end, he proposed to deploy mainly South African mercenary "special forces", backed by Papuan regular troops. The equipment supplied included "area weapons" such as automatic grenade launchers, which are unsuitable for counter-insurgency.

The South African mercenaries Sandline had recruited were combat-experienced, but they had no experience of the Papuan language, culture, climate or terrain.

Australia applied pressure on the Papua New Guinea

Government and the resulting political chaos in Papua New Guinea saw a coup attempt. Colonel Spicer's arrest and the scrapping of the Sandline plan. The Panguna mine is still in rebel hands. Even if the operation

had gone ahead, the timetable that Sandline had set itself was unrealistic. The insurrection that the SAS put down in the Omani province of Dhofar in the 1970s was of a similar scale to that in Papua New Guinea. In open terrain, operating with huge financial and military support, it took the SAS six years to win the war. The victory, however, was permanent.

The quick-fix of mercenary operations is no basis for lasting stability. I worked for several months in Sierra Leone and the lack of infrastructure there is obvious. Rebellions will recur with monotonous regularity until that is addressed.

Ken Connor is the author of *Ghost Force: The Secret History of the SAS*, to be published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson in October.

Britain's elite army force is the only one to use in such operations



A scene from Bertolucci's *Stealing Beauty* features Liv Ullmann. The film portrays a beguiling Tuscany

BARCLAYCARD

BARCLAYCARD. Proud sponsors of Britain's medal champions. Every year our grants, media training and publicity help 100 of Britain's best young sportspeople become world class. Dwain Chambers, sprinter, is just one with the mark of excellence that sets them apart.

www.barclaycard.co.uk

FREE

WHICHonline
www.which.net

Thinking Internet? Think Which? Online!

FREE

72 page 'Beginner's Guide to the Internet'

Which? Online is the internet service brought to you by Which?, an organisation recognised nationwide for its integrity and trustworthiness. Not only does Which? Online provide the speediest of access to the World Wide Web, an email address and the ability to create your own Web pages, it also gives you exclusive access to a wealth of consumer information on the internet.

Return the coupon or call the number below and you'll receive a free CD giving you everything you need to get online — plus 30 days' free unlimited internet access and Which? Online. We'll also send you a complimentary 'Beginner's Guide to the Internet' booklet. Reply today — access to the world's greatest library, and more, is just around the corner!

Sample the Internet and Which? Online for 30 days — free of charge
0645 830 256

Please quote reference number: PJS19

Please call the number above, or return this coupon to: Which? Online, FREEPOST, Hertford X, SG14 1YB.

YES! I would like a FREE CD giving me 30 days' FREE unlimited internet access and Which? Online.

PLEASE COMPLETE IN CAPITALS
Surname (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other) _____
Forename(s) _____
Address _____
Postcode _____

Your Computer Requirements: You need to have a working IBM compatible personal computer running Windows 95 or an Apple Macintosh running System 7.1 or higher. For PCs, the internet access software takes about 16 MB of hard disk space and needs at least 8 MB of RAM. For Macs, you will need 16 MB of hard disk space and 16 MB of RAM. You will also need a modem.

The Internet service you can trust **WHICHonline**
www.which.net

Envoy to after trou time in 1

Mayor of ... failed

Converted to FREE Calls

0800 036 0002

Envoy to quit after troubled time in India

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN'S High Commissioner to India announced yesterday that he is leaving the Foreign Office and will take a job in the private sector. Sir David Gore-Booth's announcement comes less than a year after the Queen's controversial state visit to India and two months after he was recalled to London for consultations in the wake of India's nuclear tests.

A high-flier who was previously Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Sir David is 55 and could normally expect five more years as one of Britain's most senior diplomats. Both he and the Foreign Office insisted yesterday that his decision was his own and was not related to the row over the Queen's visit or Britain's worsening relations with Delhi. He said, in a terse statement, that he was proud to



Sir David: early exit

have headed two top diplomatic posts, but would now like to take on new challenges in the private sector. He gave no details of any new job.

His departure, at the year's end, will inevitably provoke speculation that he has been eased out. The Queen's India visit was widely seen as a public relations fiasco, overshadowed both by the row

over her speech in Pakistan hinting at the need for the two countries to put aside differences, and by the private offer in Islamabad by Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, to mediate over Kashmir.

The Indian press launched an aggressive campaign against Britain — and Sir David in particular — accusing him of arrogance and of patronising the Indians. In Britain it was suggested that British diplomats would be blamed for the mix-up over the cancellation of a scheduled banquet speech by the Queen and the prickly Indian reaction.

Sir David, an Arabist by training, comes from a distinguished diplomatic family. His father, Sir Paul, was also High Commissioner to Delhi and retired as Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office.

Leading article, page 19



Seiko Noda, the only woman — and youngest member — of Japan's new Cabinet

Lone woman gets 'honeypot' job in Japan's Cabinet

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

AMONG the grey, ageing men at the inauguration of Japan's new Cabinet, Seiko Noda looked as if she had wandered in by mistake. The sole woman appointed by the administration of Keizo Obuchi, the new Prime Minister, she is also, at 37, the youngest Cabinet member since the Second World War.

Many Japanese wondered what qualified her for the posts and telecommunications portfolio. It is one of the "honeypot" ministries, having licensing powers that can make beneficiaries very rich and is normally reserved for long-serving party veterans.

For a few months under Ryutaro Hashimoto, the former Prime Minister, she served as parliamentary Vice-Minister of Posts and Telecommunications. But such brief experience would not normally qualify an MP who has been re-elected to Parliament only once to run an important ministry. Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) insiders said Mr Obuchi wanted a woman in a prominent post to

enhance the Government's appeal to female and younger voters — both of which groups deserted his ruling party in recent Upper House elections.

With only five women in the Lower House to choose from, Mr Obuchi opted for the youngest and most eye-catching. Ms Noda studied at a high school in the US and at Tokyo's cosmopolitan Sophia University and is one of the few Liberal Democrats with an international outlook.

Whether she would have become even an MP but for her family name is another matter: her grandfather was a Construction Minister. She is one of ten in the new Cabinet, including Mr Obuchi, who entered politics thanks to the name, money and constituency organisation "bequeathed" by a father or grandfather.

A third of the LDP's seats are "hereditary" and it is virtually impossible for young people, however talented, to win a parliamentary seat without connections.

Business, page 24

WORLD IN BRIEF

Corrupt Mayor of Beijing is jailed

Beijing: China has sentenced the most senior official to be exposed in a corruption scandal to 16 years' prison (James Pringle writes). The verdict against Chen Xitong, the former Mayor of Beijing and the city's Communist Party chief, is seen as a test of Beijing's will to combat embezzlement and will be welcomed by many citizens who are sick of official graft.

Citizens convicted of far less serious corruption often face the death penalty but one observer noted: "It took a lot of political will and shows that the leadership is determined to punish abuse of power." Chen, 68, is said to have built two villas for himself and surrounded himself with mistresses.

Sally Becker deported

London: British aid worker Sally Becker, 37, jailed in Kosovo for trying to smuggle refugees across the Albanian border, was freed, the Foreign Office said. Ms Becker, known as the Angel of Mostar for her daring freelance aid missions during the war in Bosnia, had been pardoned and deported by the Yugoslav authorities and was on her way back to Britain, a spokeswoman said. (Reuters)

Russia to ban Nazi symbols

Moscow: The Russian Government, alarmed at what it sees as a rise in neo-fascist political tendencies, expects parliament to ban Nazi symbols and propaganda before the month's end. Pavel Krashinsky, the Justice Minister, said the law had been agreed by the Cabinet. Last month President Yeltsin said youngsters were being drawn to neo-fascist solutions to social chaos. (Reuters)

Abacha aide returns \$250m

Lagos: A security adviser to the late Nigerian ruler General Sani Abacha has refunded \$250 million (£153 million) misappropriated from state funds, the newspaper *This Day* reported. It said that Ismaila Gwarzo had agreed to cooperate with an inquiry ordered by the new leader, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, into the loss of state money. (AFP)

enemies substitute the SAS' ...
which online ...
net? Online!

I'm converted...

To FREE Calls*

"When I moved to London from the US in January 97 I often telephoned my family and friends back home. After I heard that I could save money on calls by using PRIMUS, I opened an account and was amazed at just how much I saved compared with using BT. And all I do is tap in 4 digits before I dial!"

Haleh Kavesh (London)
A real Primus customer.

CONVERT TO PRIMUS AND START SAVING ON YOUR CALLS

	PRIMUS	BT
USA	7p	37p
AUSTRALIA	13p	49p
BRAZIL	45p	137p
JAPAN	17p	57p
COLOMBIA	47p	125p
INDIA	59p	180p

THESE RATES APPLY ALL DAY EVERY DAY!
CALL SAVINGS TO OVER 230 COUNTRIES

CALL FREE ON **0800 036 0002**

www.primustel.com.uk

PRIMUS

CUTTING THE COST OF CALLING

AGENTS REQUIRED IN EUROPE: Primus Ltd, Primus UK, (44) 0171 369 0000

APPROVED used Jeeps.
More than just roadworthy.

EVERY APPROVED USED JEEP IS PUT THROUGH A RIGOROUS MULTI-POINT CHECK TO GUARANTEE IT'S IN PREMIER CONDITION. IT ALSO COMES WITH A 12 MONTH OR 20,000 MILE WARRANTY, 12 MONTHS ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE, AND A FULL VEHICLE HISTORY CHECK. SO IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BE SOLD DOWN THE RIVER, MAKE SURE IT'S AN APPROVED USED JEEP.

Jeep
GENUINE APPROVED USED

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT YOUR LOCAL DEALER OR CALL 0800 616159.
OR SEND COUPON TO JEEP INFORMATION SERVICE, FREEPOST 1848, SANDWICH, KENT CT13 9B

MR/MRS/MISS/MS (Initials) SURNAME ADDRESS POSTCODE PHONE HOME PHONE BUSINESS

ROADS REVIEW: WINNERS AND LOSERS

Jammed stretches of M25 to get 12 lanes

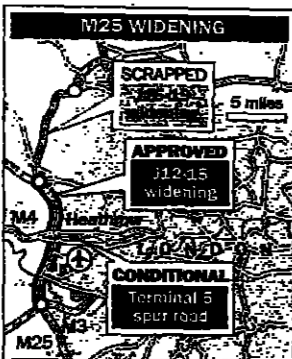
Drivers will also be allowed to use the hard shoulder on congested routes, reports Mark Henderson

THE M25 will become Britain's first 12-lane motorway under the Government's long-awaited roads review announced yesterday...

inquiry by agreeing to the scheme. The only reason to make the road wider is to help BAA's case at the inquiry...



What the RAC calls the most congested motorway in Europe - the M25 - will be made more free-flowing by a range of traffic management measures



used as an extra lane in peak times will be applied to other stretches. The M25 is a crucial hub in our motorway network and is important to the entire country...

Business and motoring groups welcomed the widening project. Edmund King, of the RAC, said it would improve the most congested motorway in Europe...

Elsewhere in London, a spur road linking the M25 to Terminal 5 will be built if the project is approved at the public inquiry...

A VILLAGE in the Yorkshire Dales resigned itself yesterday to thousands more lorries trundling through its main street from dawn till late at night.

By Stephen Farrell

handed back to the local authority, a decision angrily described by bypass supporters as "passing the buck to a council that can't afford to build it".

where Iain Macleod, the former Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer, is buried. Bernard Dickinson, a retired antique dealer who has lived in Gargrave for 30 years...



Holidaymakers and lorries will continue to pound through Gargrave village

Disappointed village has heavy load to bear

Maximum PC power Tiny price

It's the best high performance value in the High Street. True Formula One pole position pace - for the price of a family PC.



Advertisement for 'TINY' PC system featuring 'SUPER POWER SYSTEM', 'WINDOWS 98 NOW INCLUDED', and '400MHz' processor. Price listed as £1199.

Lloyds TSB Group results for the first half of 1998

"Lloyds TSB core businesses have produced another set of good results with a healthy growth in profit. This performance enabled the board to increase the interim dividend by 26 per cent reflecting both our confidence in the future and the strength of our capital generation."

We expect further progress in the second half of the year. Sir Brian Pitman, Chairman

Table with 4 columns: Metric, Half-year to 30 June 1998 (unaudited) £m, Half-year to 30 June 1997 £m, Half-year to 31 December 1997 £m. Rows include Profit before tax, Special items, Profit after tax, etc.

Special items include provisions for redress to past purchasers of pension policies... Financial information for the year ended 31 December 1997 is based on the statutory accounts for 1997...

Vertical text on the left edge: 'el will traffic y from ehenge', 'FRANCE', '44', 'PEOPLE', '0 711 711'

Hangman told Bentley: Just follow me

On January 28, 1953, Albert Pierrepoint, the hangman, led Derek Bentley from his cell at Wandsworth prison to his death. His account of the teenager's final hours has been discovered among notes made for his autobiography, *The Executioner*, published in 1974. It was left out of the book, possibly because of continuing sensitivity over the controversial hanging. The execution merited little more than a paragraph in the book; the hanging of Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be executed, was treated in a similar fashion. Pierrepoint, who hanged 530 people, eventually became an opponent of capital punishment, which was abolished in 1969. He died in 1992, aged 87. This lost memoir was found among papers left by an author who collaborated on the autobiography.



Bentley, left, and the hangman Pierrepoint, who wrote: "He looked like a schoolboy. He had been so sure that he wouldn't hang"

When you go to hang a boy of 19 years old, it does not matter that he is tall and broad-shouldered, for at nine o'clock on the morning he is to die, he still looks only a boy.

And so did Derek Bentley when the sickly green door of the condemned cell was abruptly whisked open for me on January 28, 1953. He sat at his prison table, watching the doorway. When I walked in with my assistant and the group of silent prison officials crowding behind us, I believe that, because we were all dressed so normally, in every-day lounge suits, young Derek Bentley thought then, at that moment, we had come with his reprieve. His face glowed with an instant of eagerness. Then he saw the yellow leather strap in my right hand, and his eyes fixed upon it. The sight of this wiped all the hope from his expression. He stood up very slowly and clumsily. For all his youthfulness, he was the tallest person in that pale little room.

The jury, who found both men guilty of murder, added a recommendation of mercy for Bentley. So he became one of the few killers for whom such a recommendation meant nothing. A storm of public feeling blew up. It increased as Bentley's last days slipped by, his appeal was dismissed, and protest marches by crowds, pleas in Parliament, all went unheeded by the authorities.

The storm was going on when I received the long grey envelope asking me to attend at Wandsworth prison to hang Bentley. As I peered from the upper windows of the No 77 bus that took me to Wandsworth the day before the execution, I saw newspaper placards along every street, proclaiming: "MP's Fight to Save Bentley". So even 16 hours before the execution was due, there was still doubt that it would be allowed to take place.

My first glimpse of Bentley as he moved at his own pace around the inner yard showed he was taller and more broad of shoulders than either of the two prison officers who guarded his last hours. His fair hair was blowing about in the cold wind. In his grey prison clothes he looked like a schoolboy dressed for some classroom charade, despite the cigarette that drooped in his

mouth. Each time the wind varied in the prison courtyard, he winced away from his own cigarette smoke, and blinked his eyes clumsily.

We expected trouble with Bentley. We knew he was physically very strong, and a little simple-minded. He had been so sure that he wouldn't hang.

It did not seem logical to his uncomplex brain that — if Craig fired the murder shot and was not to be hanged — he should be executed. His family shared his belief. They went further than just thinking he would not hang. They seemed to expect that he would shortly be released from prison.

When his family came to visit him at Wandsworth, the stark little interview room where they saw him had become almost a replica of their cosy family parlour in Norbury: father, mother, 10-year-old brother Dennis and sister Iris, all laughing and making jokes, sharing fruit and cigarettes.

They laughed at Bentley's description of his death-cell as "my hotel room with bath". Several times he repeated a

favourite joke — "I have beaten the wardens at cards again today, but I still can't beat them to the door!"

When his sister Iris told him she had bought him a ticket for a new year dance, his mother is reported to have said: "No, we'll have to ask the dance hall manager to change it for another ticket next year, so Derek can have it when he comes out."

And at Christmas in the Bentley home, those few weeks before he was to die, the family placed two neatly wrapped parcels upon the Christmas tree. One was a silk tie, the other a box of chocolates. Each was inscribed: "To Derek with love — and the best of luck." But Derek, of course, never

did go home to unwrap those two parcels.

It was nearly dark upon that January afternoon when I walked up to the fortress-like gates of Wandsworth Prison. Just enough light remained to pick out the gilt hands of the jail clock at 4pm and the gloomy, black iron portaculis.

I reported to the Governor, and found him strained and restless. He advised me that it was possible we might have trouble next day. For after the appeal had been turned down, the gay atmosphere had gone from the family visits. They had ceased to be pleasant parties in the prison interview room, and there had been no more morale-lifting jokes. Instead, Bentley murmured re-

peatedly: "They can't hang me — can they?"

The day before his execution, he walked about the condemned cell, stumbling for words while the warden sat with pencil and drab-coloured prison notepad to write a letter for him. In that letter, there were such phrases as: "Don't let my cycle frames get rusty, they might come in handy some day... keep my mac clean and my tie..."

That night in my room at Wandsworth prison — after checking Bentley's weight, height and physical structure, making my calculation for length of drop, and the routine test of all the apparatus — I sat drinking a bottle of beer and listened to the radio. Parlia-

ment was at a late session and 200 members had signed a petition demanding mercy for Bentley. The motion for a debate had been rejected, but the possibility of a last-minute reprieve still hung in the air, stronger than I have ever known it on any other execution eve.

I must say that my own thoughts were not concerned with any private sympathies for Bentley: I was occupied with the thought that he was fit tall, a weightlifter and boxer with a brain younger than his body.

Only when he saw me coming towards him to pinion him would Bentley fully begin to realise that he was to die. And as one grey-haired prison officer murmured to me: "If that boy does blow his top tomorrow, Albert, you're going to see the toughest five minutes you've ever had."

Next day I woke early, did my morning test of the apparatus and found all in order. I ate — my usual, Wandsworth breakfast of fried plates and potatoes, and studied the newspapers for any last-minute reprieve — just as

Bentley's friends and family were presumably studying theirs.

Bentley's father had led a protesting crowd to the block of flats in Great Essex Street where the Home Secretary, Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, lived. They had shouted: "Bentley is not sleeping tonight and neither shall Maxwell-Fyfe."

But the morning papers carried headlines only that there was to be "No Reprieve for Bentley" and I knew I would have my job to do. With my assistant, Harry Kirk, I reported to the Governor. He was pale and obviously forcing himself to be very calm. He spoke in a low voice: "Good morning, Albert — I see that it has got to be done."

"That's all right, sir," I told him. He led the way to the condemned cell, and we waited half a minute until the Governor gave the signal, at 6.0 seconds to 9am. Then the door was hastily opened. I went in as quickly as I could without seeming to hurry, and Harry Kirk, who was a burly man, was just behind me.

Bentley had jumped at the sudden opening of the door. Now he slowly rose. The prison officers on each side of him came quickly to their feet. The boy's crisp, brushed-back fair hair was inches taller than everybody else in the room. I went round the table after him, took his arm without a word, and, very carefully, so there was no jerk that might trigger off his resistance, I put the pinning loop upon his wrists and suddenly made it tight.

I am sure he still had not properly weighed up the situation. He was still uncertain what was happening. He moved his shoulders wonderingly, but did not say anything. I whispered, "Just follow me, lad" and added soothingly: "It's all right, Derek — just follow me."

He started to move and his body caught the edge of the table. He appeared not to feel this, although the table shook. He followed me unaided into the adjoining execution chamber and stood on the chalk-marked upon the wooden floor. I put the white cap over his head, and noose with it, and heard the familiar click of belt and buckle as Harry swiftly pinioned his legs, then flung his arms back in a gesture of completion.

The controversy from that instant became purposeless, for Derek Bentley was dead.

NIECE PLACES APPEAL COURT JUDGMENT BY GRAVE

DEREK BENTLEY'S niece completed the 46-year crusade to clear her uncle's name yesterday when she laid the Court of Appeal judgment quashing his conviction for murdering a policeman by his grave.

Maria Dinglewell-Bentley said that, in doing so, she had fulfilled the dying wish of her mother — Bentley's sister — who died

last year. Standing in front of the black granite tombstone in Croydon cemetery, she said: "My mother always said she would take the pardon with her. She wasn't here to do that, but at least I can try to fulfill part of her promise." By Derek's launching the judgment to the grave and it will be staying here for ever.

FAMILY SUMMER BREAKS

Freedom and fun for all the family

BOOK BEFORE 28th AUGUST AND SAVE

10%

At Posthouse we think families deserve a better break. That's why we've created Posthouse Liberty Breaks — a fabulous package offering every member of the family the freedom to escape their daily routine and have a great time.

Posthouse New Family Features:
For mum, dad and the family

- Family host.
- Free swimming.
- Newly-equipped play rooms/areas.
- Baby listening service.
- NEW Mega Bites kids menu for up to 16-year-olds.
- NEW kids' placemat and crayons in restaurant.
- Sunday lunchtime entertainment, such as clowns and face painters.
- Late checkout facility — now 3pm on Sunday.
- Plus we will offer to remove all alcohol from the room fridge and block adult movies in a room where children are staying.

For the kids

- Welcome pack.
- Separate check-in facilities, including steps to fill in their own card at reception.
- Sunday comic/magazine.

LOCATION	2 NIGHTS DINING, BED AND BREAKFAST PER ADULT	2 NIGHTS BED AND BREAKFAST PER ADULT
Basildon	£77	£55
Bristol	£102	£81
Cardiff	£70	£48
Carlisle	£93	£73
Croydon	£90	£68
Epping	£88	£66
Fareham	£90	£68
Farnborough	£102	£81
Gloucester	£93	£73
Haydock	£102	£81
Hemel Hempstead	£91	£70
Hull Marina	£100	£79
Ipwich	£79	£57
Lancaster	£104	£82
Leeds/Bradford		
(Bramhope)	£93	£73
Leeds/Selby	£72	£52
Malden/Stone/Sevenoaks	£93	£73
Plymouth	£102	£81
Rochester	£86	£64
Rugby/Northampton	£81	£59
Southampton	£95	£73
Stoke-on-Trent	£90	£68
Swindon	£86	£64

Posthouse
Posthouse is a division of Forte Hotels

To take advantage of this special offer, simply choose your hotel from the list opposite. Then call

0845 603 6000

and quote reference Liberty 3

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Prices shown are all-inclusive rates. Prices are per person based on 2 night accommodation (Friday and Saturday), full breakfast, 3-course evening meal and 2 nights accommodation and breakfast only for applicable & UK at 12.5% based on two adults sharing a standard posthouse room. At Posthouse, up to two children under 16 stay and eat free when sharing a room with up to two adults, subject to availability of suitable rooms. See website for the accompanying adult's terms and conditions. Bookings must be taken from the Young Dots menu. Bookings must be taken before 28th September 1998 (including 28th-31st August 1998). All cancellations are subject to availability with a normal number of cancellations available at their promotional rates. These offers cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or special promotion.

Introducing *life cover* with a

no-claims bonus

From only **£10** a month

free

when you start your Moneyback Protection Plan

With traditional term cover, unless you die the money you pay is lost.

Thankfully, our new Moneyback Protection Plan is different, because it includes a no-claims bonus.

If you die, the cash lump sum will be paid to help your family face the financial future. But if you don't you could pick up a healthy cash lump sum instead. What's more, premiums can start at only £10 a month*, fixed for the term of your plan (from 10 years to 25 years).

To find out more about life cover with a moneyback, no-claims bonus, call now or return the coupon today.

Call Freephone please quote ref. C29/DL05

0500 600 900

Lines are open 9am to 8pm weekdays and 9am to 5pm weekends. For your protection, calls are usually recorded and randomly monitored.

*For £10 a month, a single non-smoker aged 30 years (best birthday, aiming for 70% Moneyback) over a 15 year term could get £39,789 worth of cover. The value of units in an investment can go down as well as up. Full written details are available upon request. Now and then, we may tell you about other products or services offered by the Legal & General group of companies that we believe may be of interest to you. If you would prefer not to receive this carefully selected information, please contact us. Legal & General Direct Limited is a representative only of the Legal & General insurance group, members of which are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and (BIC) for the purposes of recommendations, advising on and selling life insurance and investment products bearing the Legal & General name. Legal & General Direct Limited, Registered in England (No. 2702080). Registered Office: Temple Court, 11 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4N 4TF.

Please send me more information on the Legal & General Moneyback Protection Plan.

Title (Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms) _____ Surname _____

Forename(s) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Date of Birth _____

Tel no. home _____

Tel no. work _____

Post to: Legal & General, FREEPOST (S0W0487), Causeway, CP1 3YU (no stamp required). Further information on other Legal & General products is available on our website: www.Legal.com. Ref: C29/DL05

Legal & General

trust us to deliver

Life goes on

خبر كذا رتب

A year ago This Life's cast feared dole. Now they're the in-crowd, writes Carol Midgley

Life goes on for axed actors

Their fans are still in mourning, but for the cast of *This Life*, life has never looked sweeter. Twelve months after BBC2 waved a tearful farewell to its hippest-ever series, the stars who feared they might be heading for the dole queue have emerged as the most sought-after actors in Britain.

As Miles, Anna, Milly, Egg, Warren, Percy and Rachel, they portrayed the dissolute, drink-fuelled lives of twenty-something lawyers and their problematic relationships. In real life, with 20 jobs between them, things are going rather more smoothly. The show, which died after a promised third series failed to materialise, has achieved the legendary status of a creature cut down in its prime, while its offspring have become the new television in-crowd.

In terms of hit rates, Natasha Little, who played the infuriating Rachel, has been the most successful. She is about to play Becky Sharpe in *Vanity Fair*, the BBC's showpiece costume drama this autumn, and has been offered another lead role in *The Clandestine Marriage*, a film with Timothy Spall. Almost as soon as the final credits rolled on *This Life* last year, she was signed up for the role of Fanny in last month's showing of *Far From the Madding Crowd* on ITV and for parts in *Cadfael* and *Fay Weldon's Big Women*.

But in terms of public profile, it is Daniela Nardini, the chain-smoking, cocaine-snorting Anna, who has come out on top. She played the much-publicised role of Layla, the feisty Scot in *Big Women*, and is about to bare all again in a new "sex thriller", *Undercover Heart* on BBC1. It was she who became the sex interest of *This Life* and her former co-stars say that, even today, men they meet ask for her telephone number.

Jack Davenport, who played the pompous Miles, is also said to have work "coming out of his ears". Having just finished *Ultraviolet*, a six-part drama about vampires for Channel 4, he is just about to depart for Italy, where he has a role in the film of Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr Ripley*, alongside Matt Damon and Gwyneth Paltrow. Davenport, son of Maria Aitken and Nigel Davenport, was filming a television version of *Macbeth*, in which he plays Malcolm, before the last series of *This Life* had finished. But he admitted that he would have loved to appear in a third *This Life*.

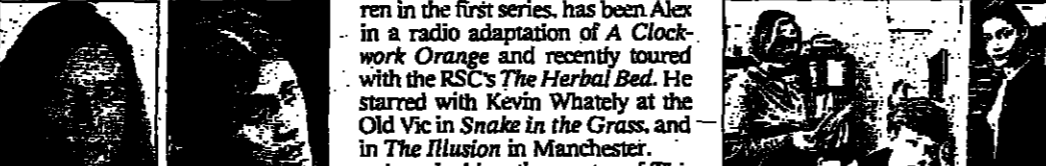
Amita Dhiri, who played the uptight Milly, gave birth to a daughter earlier this year, but it proved only a brief interruption to her career. She kept working until Christmas, filming a number of television roles, including starring with John Hannah in a two-part *McCallum* whodunit, *Dead Men's Fingers*. She has just finished making a film, *24 Hours in London*, and is also in discussion about a new series for Carlton.

Her screen boyfriend, Egg, played by Andrew Lincoln, is appearing at the Bush Theatre, London, in *Sugar Sugar*, where he is cast in the role of a man whose life falls apart after his marriage breaks up. He was snapped up to play Mr Hartwright in *The Woman in White* soon after *This Life* finished, and also appears in a new film, *Human Traffic*.

The BBC video of the first series



Launchpad to success: the first *This Life* cast, from top, Jack Davenport, Daniela Nardini, Amita Dhiri, Andrew Lincoln and Jason Hughes. All have found themselves in demand since



Ramon Tikaram: from Percy to *Jesus Christ Superstar*

of *This Life* has sold 200,000 copies and the second series has just been released. Scarcely a young actor was left empty-handed after the show was laid to rest, although some have been in greater demand than others. Ramon Tikaram, the sexually confused Percy, went on to play Judas in the recent West End production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*; Steve John Shepherd (Joe) is currently starring alongside Pauline Quirke in *Maisie Raine*; Luisa Bradshaw-White (Kira) is in TV's drama series *Crafters* and in the new series of *Birds of a Feather*. Jason Hughes, who played War-

ren in the first series, has been Alex in a radio adaptation of *A Clockwork Orange* and recently toured with the RSC's *The Herbal Bed*. He starred with Kevin Whately at the Old Vic in *Snake in the Grass*, and in *The Illusion* in Manchester.

Amy Jenkins, the creator of *This Life*, is not surprised by the actors' success. "It was one of those situations where everything just came together right. It was just meant to be," she said. "The casting was excellent and, when an actor is cast in the right role, they shine."

Jenkins' first film, *Elephant Juice*, which she is making with Miramax, is currently in production. She developed the script with Sam Miller, the first director on *This Life*.

"It is set in London and it is about your relationships and the choices you have to make when you turn 30," said Jenkins, who is in her early thirties. "In astrology there is something called Saturn returning. When you get to 29, Saturn does a complete circle of your life, which is when things get difficult." The film will be released next year.



Davenport in *Ultraviolet*, a six-part series for Channel 4



Nardini, left, as Layla in Fay Weldon's *Big Women*



Lincoln is to appear in a new film, *Human Traffic*



Hughes in radio adaptation of *A Clockwork Orange*



Dhiri in *24 Hours in London*, which she has just finished



Steve John Shepherd, who played Joe, right, is currently starring with Pauline Quirke in *Maisie Raine* on BBC1

Creative clarity in tune with the past

CONCERT
CBSO/Rattle
Birmingham

There could be all kinds of reasons why Sir Simon Rattle chose another Beethoven cycle for his last major project as music director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Economics — the likelihood of five full houses at no great cost — must have had something to do with it. So must the extraordinary success of their last Beethoven cycle in Birmingham (and Frankfurt) three years ago and the prospect of performing the same nine symphonies at the Salzburg Festival later this month.

It would be nice to think, however, that it is also a conductor's tribute to an orchestra with which he has learnt much of his art, extending his experience in areas of the repertoire long familiar to the instrumentalists who actually have to play it. As far as the Beethoven symphonies are concerned, what they have developed over the past 18 years is a style that is thoroughly distinctive in its combination of historical perspective with a keen awareness of the here and now. The CBSO does not, of course, play on period instruments but its Beethoven sound is clearly influenced by the authentic movement, just as its texts (based on Jonathan Del Mar's new edition) have discarded traditional accretions and long-standing inaccuracies. The result of all this is clarity, pure colouring and a textural balance that, on a few occasions it might seem in a novel place, reflects what Beethoven wrote.

As for the here and now, that depends very much on the rhythmic vitality injected by an alert conductor and executed by a secure ensemble. However spruce the sound in the First Symphony — in the opening concert in the new series in Symphony Hall — there would have been little life in it without the rhythmic precision that, without rushing the tempo, always sustains anticipation of the next beat. Nothing got held up by uncertainty and there was no loss of interest through even a momentary failure in the pulse rate. At the same time, in an interpretation admirable for its recreation of the composer's wit and youthful bravado, there was nothing repressive in Rattle's regulation of its progress.

The same rhythmic qualities were apparent in the *Eroica Symphony* after the interval. It is much the more demanding work, of course, partly because of the longer structural spans and partly because of the historical associations that go with it. How, for example, do you avoid the solemnity that generations of conductors since Beethoven have attached to the *Marcia funebre* slow movement without devaluing its seriousness? The Rattle answer is that you do not drag your feet but find the funeral element in Beethoven's inspired scoring for the strings. And the structures are sustained not by tenacity but by articulating the whole work as a dramatic experience, with all the acoustic shocks and sensations that implies.

GERALD LARNER

OPERA & BALLET

COLLEGE 0171 832 8300
LAST 2 PERFORMANCES
THE ROYAL BALLET
MAYON Today 2.00 & 7.00

DANCE

COLLEGE 0171 832 8300 Even 7.30
THIS HUNDRED - FOR ONE
WEEK ONLY Sat 7.30 Sat and 2.30
WAYNE SLEEP in DASH

THEATRES

AMERICA
020 7018 0200 (1st) 020 7018 0201 (2nd)
TICKETS FOR A TICKET M.A.S.
WINTER OUTSTANDING MUSICAL

CHICAGO
THE MUSICAL

BUTHE
HENSHELL

MICOLA
HUGHES

CLARE PETERS
SWEET FLAMES
Mon-Sat 8.00, Wed & Sat 3.00
BEST ANTHEM/CYRIL FOR SELECTED
WEEKS SAT PERFORM

ALBERT 018 776900 4444
Even 7.45, Wed 7.30 & Sat 3.00
THE PETER HALL COMPANY
Christopher Columbus Kilt O'Brien
Simon West 21.00, 1st & 3rd
Richard Todd
Nicholas Parsons
Oscar Wilde CLASSIC COMEDY
AN IDEAL HUSBAND
GREAT AND CLASSICAL 5.15pm

FINAL 8 WEEKS!
SHOWBOAT
"A MASTERCLASS IN WHAT AMERICAN
THEATRE STILL DOES BEST."
MUSICALS DON'T COME MUCH
BETTER THAN THIS!
Prize Edward Theatre - London

APOLLO VICTORIA 0171 418 6600
LAST 2 PERFORMANCES
THE ROYAL BALLET
MAYON Today 2.00 & 7.00

WINDS DOWN THE WIND
The Wind in the Willows
The Wind in the Willows
The Wind in the Willows

STARLIGHT EXPRESS
THE FASTEST SHOW ON WHEELS
Evening 7.00pm
The 8.00pm Show from 21.00
Now Booking to June 1999

APOLLO VICTORIA 0171 418 6600
LAST 2 PERFORMANCES
THE ROYAL BALLET
MAYON Today 2.00 & 7.00

DOCTOR DOLOITE
Starring
Philip Schofield
THIS IS A SUPER-HERO HIT TV
THIS SUMMER'S UNMISSABLE
FAMILY OUTING! Express
Bookings & Info
Bookings to June 1999
Directed by
Simon Fricker
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
No 10pm

APOLLO, Shalbury Ave 0171 418 6600
LAST 2 PERFORMANCES
THE ROYAL BALLET
MAYON Today 2.00 & 7.00

POPcorn
Most shows on 10th Sept
10th Sept
10th Sept

DOUGLAS BRIDGEMAN
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER FESTIVAL THEATRE
01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER 01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER 01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

APOLLO VICTORIA 0171 418 6600
LAST 2 PERFORMANCES
THE ROYAL BALLET
MAYON Today 2.00 & 7.00

STARLIGHT EXPRESS
THE FASTEST SHOW ON WHEELS
Evening 7.00pm
The 8.00pm Show from 21.00
Now Booking to June 1999

DOUGLAS BRIDGEMAN
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER FESTIVAL THEATRE
01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER 01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER 01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

APOLLO VICTORIA 0171 418 6600
LAST 2 PERFORMANCES
THE ROYAL BALLET
MAYON Today 2.00 & 7.00

STARLIGHT EXPRESS
THE FASTEST SHOW ON WHEELS
Evening 7.00pm
The 8.00pm Show from 21.00
Now Booking to June 1999

DOUGLAS BRIDGEMAN
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER FESTIVAL THEATRE
01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER 01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER 01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER 01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER 01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

CHICHESTER 01243 84152
DORIS HARRIS
THE UNEXPECTED MAN
Directed by
Christopher Harrison
Starring
Christopher Harrison
Magical music at the top
of their hearts
Mon-Sat 7.30, Sat Wed 3.00
Last 4 Weeks - Book 22 AUG

DON WILLIAMS
1998 TOUR

OCTOBER

2 Scarborough - 01723 374500

3 Scarborough - 0191 514 2517

4 Inverness - 07463 239234

5 Avonmouth - 01292 611222

6 Ayr - 01292 611222

7 Llandudno - 01746 291000

8 Southampton - 07706 540204

9 Halifax - 01422 351158

10 Grimsby - 01473 211311

11 Oxford - 01865 244544

12 Brentwood - 01272 262616

13 Belfast - 01232 234400

14 Derby - 01534 260716

15 Bournemouth - 01329 291796

16 Manchester - 0161 242 3525

17 Walsley - 01782 267772

18 Watford - 01923 456000

19 Gillingham - 01483 433333

20 Plymouth - 01752 229922

21 Crawley - 01293 556666

22 Penzance - 01706 924955

The entente and double entendre

Ben Macintyre on the diplomatic perils of a slip of the tongue

Everything was going swimmingly at last week's bilingua outing in Sedgefield laid on by Tony Blair for Lionel Jospin, his French counterpart, until the two leaders were both treacherously betrayed, like so many before them, when they wandered too far into the perilous territory of a foreign tongue.

The Prime Minister had been airing his fluent French well up until that point, and M Jospin was making a good fist of English, which he speaks badly. Both men, who have little in common, politically or personally, were showing mutual admiration as they kicked a football around and drank a pint of Theakston's. Then a sneaky French double-entendre came hurrying out of nowhere, and reduced the visiting and hitherto respectful French media to hysterical giggles.

"J'ai toujours envie de Lionel de touter les lacons," said Mr Blair, intending to express his envy of the French leader's popularity and improving economy. M Jospin's pinkish complexion went from languid to lobster and it was quietly explained to Mr Blair that what he had actually said was: "I always desire Lionel in every way."

A few moments later it was M Jospin's turn to suffer a gust of mirth blowing in the opposite direction, as he emerged smacking his lips from the Dun Cow Inn and declared: "The cook is delicious." He swiftly corrected himself by "cooking" only to be corrected by Mr Blair, who pointed out that the pub cook was rather delicious, as it happened.

The situation will be familiar to many: you think you speak a foreign language pretty well; your interlocutor thinks he/she speaks your language better; you end up speaking each other's languages. Result: linguistic mayhem.

Mr Blair and M Jospin are not the first to discover that mixing languages, like metaphors, can be a double-edged sword of Damocles. Even the most crucial and carefully prepared speech in a foreign language may contain a lurking explosive, as demonstrated by John F. Kennedy's "Ich bin ein Berliner" which can be translated, a little unfairly, as "I am a doughnut" because he left the "ein" in.

François Mitterand often pretended not to understand English, knowing well that major pitfalls lie in appearing to understand more than you do, or believing you are being understood more than you are.

Harold Macmillan's insistence on speaking what he thought was French to de Gaulle on the subject of nuclear weapons, and being roundly misunderstood, coloured Franco-British relations for years afterwards.

More recently Chris Patten, when interviewed in French about his book-writing sojourn in France, is reputed to have declared that his holiday home in the Tarn gave him "une grande jouissance", a word suggesting rather more than mere cerebral pleasure, which seemed unlikely even for such a passionate Francophile.

Ronald Reagan never ventured into foreign languages after discovering, as a youth, that with prolonged rehearsal he was able to ask

a question in French, but could never make head or tail of the answer. Even politicians able to speak another language well, like Jacques Chirac who learnt English while working in an American Howard Johnson's motel, are understandably cautious. When I interviewed the French President some time ago and asked him which language he would prefer to converse in, he replied pointedly: "If I am discussing important matters, I speak in French."

Getting the translation right, or intentionally wrong, can be a matter of life and death. On August 17, 1914, with the German Army marching towards Paris, the irascible French General Charles Lanrezac visited the equally crusty British Field Marshal Sir John French, on what would soon be the battlefields of northern France. Already poor relations between the two commanders deteriorated rapidly when they discovered that neither could speak the other's language intelligibly. The tension was near snapping-point when Sir John, in badly wounded French, asked whether the Germans would cross the Meuse River at Huy (which he pronounced "Ahoy?") and the general

replied in French, with swinging sarcasm: "Tell the Marshal I think the Germans have come to fish."

"What does he say? What does he say?" demanded the Englishman.

"He says they are going to cross the river, Sir," replied General Henry Wilson, with a smooth piece of mistranslation that kept the two leaders on speaking terms and probably altered the course of the First World War.

As every Brussels diplomat knows, there are distinct advantages to working in two languages: without violating his basic import, a communiqué can be toned down or up, tweaked, flattened or sugared when translated into another language, giving invaluable room for nuance and often helping to keep negotiations moving.

A language gulf can also slow matters down, as on the occasion when a French member of the European Parliament laudably congratulated one of his colleagues on his "prudence Normande". The simultaneous translator did his best, but for weeks afterwards English-speaking MEPs remained completely baffled as to why "Norman Wisdom" had inexplicably been introduced into the proceedings.

However, perhaps the main advantage of being able to speak, or mis-speak another language, is the opportunity this provides for giving offence without apparently intending to. The master of this technique was Churchill, whose grinding accent in French belied his grasp of the language.

In one apocryphal address in French, Sir Winston was expected to reminisce about the contrasts of war and peace in his past. He began, surely more out of devilry than ignorance: "Quand je regarde mon derrière, je le vois divisé en deux grandes parties...", before a technician intervened to prevent a major diplomatic incident and cut off his microphone.



Go easy on sin, Mr Blair

Amitai Etzioni on proper views of impropriety

If there is a subject on which Americans top the Brits, it is corruption: we are much better at it. We also know a lot about how not to deal with it. Basically, moralising makes things worse. A hotter-than-thou posture helps to win elections, but it is best abandoned when governing. Otherwise one invites the opposition and media to show that the current administration is also composed of mortals. The subject must be to acknowledge fully upfront human imperfection. Cabinet members, MPs, and staff members are subject to so many do's and don'ts that some must be expected to cross the line sooner or later. Acknowledging the humanity of those who govern does not mean that one should ignore human frailties. But the treatment must be honest and leave room for redemption. Any claim to purge the rascals and be pure thereafter is disingenuous at best and will backfire. Specifically, personal frailties, many concerning misplaced sex, are best addressed much more lightly than violations of public duties. When censure is called for, the Government should rely on a distinction between venal and carnal sins, omission and commission, recognised by many religions and in law. Thus, even if a member of staff were to promise a lobbyist an appointment with a Cabinet minister, this is a far cry from selling the Soviet Union a list of MIS agents. Punishment should fit the crime.

Van Gogh to van art

We don't need officials to decide what is aesthetic. Just look afresh

The Tate Gallery has declared that the ice-cream van currently parked outside the Royal Albert Hall is art, provided an artist "trained or untrained" will say so. The van was castigated as a curbside eyesore by the Earl of Snowdon. Last month a painter, Edna Weiss, offered the van to the Tate as "conceptual". Without permission from the owner, one Alberto D'Auria, she suggested that his van be parked outside the Tate, where it could continue trading normally but with its ice-cream conceptually enhanced.

But why outside the Tate? asked the Tate. Mrs Weiss blinked. She had meant her offer satirically. The Tate could not be serious. But those who know the Tate know that serious is its second name. Were a smile to hazard the sacred threshold, it would be seized, frozen and pinned to the wall. Simon Wilson, the Curator of Interpretation (presumably spokesman), described the van as "an ordinary visual object... in a way a naive work of art created by the owner who decorated it in an extraordinary way."

To me this declaration reads, "Ice Cream... Refreshment... Hot and Cold drinks". But Mr Wilson has conceptual second sight. He can spot a Carracci in a Cornetto, a Hockney in a Häagen-Dazs and a Watteau in a Mr Whippy. In conversation with *The Times* arts correspondent, Darya Albergé, he invoked his patron saint, Marcel Duchamp, in support of the van.

The news has been greeted with great excitement in my part of town. We have five recyclable waste tubs, four parking-ticket vending machines, two rows of yellow lines on the street and a BT phone booth, conceptually packed and ready for next year's Turner Prize. The phone booth is our masterpiece. It is of the Early "Sensation" School, with an interior of pornographic advertisements. We feel it fulfils Duchamp's maxim that "art, in the larger frame of things, is small". We have an artist to "describe" the collection within the terms of the act, and sponsors willing, indeed eager, to fund the move to Millbank.

Where would we all be without the Tate as Aunt Sally? What is novel in the Wilson-Weiss exchange is its banality. At a time when British art seems to be drifting, halfheartedly, back to a more painterly course, the Tate is solid for the Old Religion. Provenance still determines merit. "Anything and everything is art," says Mr Wilson, "because an artist says it is. Anyone who nominates themselves as an artist, whether trained or not, can designate any object as a work of art, as long as they can persuade someone to show it in a recognised venue." A van is a van. What makes it art is that Lord Snowdon finds it execrable. Mrs Weiss suggests it for display and Mr Wilson is "persuaded". Each is appointed gatekeeper of the Fortressed Art. But Alberto, who made the thing, is of no account. He was said yesterday to be too busy making Tutti-Frutti to comment. He was not, on Mr Wilson's definition, the relevant "artist". That title goes to the Weiss-Wilson alliance.

When those in positions of power say unbelievably silly things, we lesser mortals are tempted to down tools and depart for the pub to recover our joie de vivre. Mr Wilson's job is apparently to accept or reject the sacks, stones, bricks, lengths of pipe, lumps of metal, lightbulbs, furniture and "bodily fluids" that artists deposit at his door for exhibition. He is the reincarnation of the medieval Inspector of Relics, who tested pilgrimic souvenirs for holiness. The loot was great and the selection tough. There was no such thing as an inherently unobjectionable, any more than, in Mr Wilson's eyes, there is an inherently unartistic van. All that matters is, was it brought in by "one of us", and can

from your face that you are excited, but we cannot hang your face on the wall. No, you cannot park this van outside the Tate and ask us to call it a Turner. Off to your studio."

Yet Mr Wilson is entitled at least to plead Turner's excitement. We can all see the van as a thing of beauty or, in Lord Snowdon's case, ugliness. We can discuss and criticise its design and decoration, and even do so without the condescending, obfuscating interpretation of artists, custodians and mediators. Alberto's artefact is a public object, more so than any museum exhibit. Duchamp asked us to "look afresh" at a urinal. He did so to satirise art rather than elevate design. But to see streets, buildings, booths, ice-cream vans, even laboratories as pleasing or unpleasing to the eye is an essential liberal education. From the Romans to the Victorians, artists devoted themselves to the design of public spaces. It is only our age that has handed that job to engineers and kicked artists into the gallery. How we sacrificed public taste to private affluence, I do not know. I am inclined to blame the professionalisation of art. How many "curators of interpretation" work in Kensington planning department?

Suffled inside or outside the Tate, Alberto's van would be stripped of function and context. It would be a sales gimmick, a freak show, like the Royal Academy's *Sensation*. The van should be appreciated, praised or excoriated, for what it is, a work of public design in a public place. Art or design, who cares? That is Mr Wilson's distinction, not mine, nor I imagine Alberto's. As Malraux pleaded, the city is a museum without walls, a gallery without curators. Mr Wilson should have the courage of his convictions. He should lead his pilgrims down the steps of the Tate and off to Kensington, there to explain why the ice-cream van so moves him. It should not be carried to his cathedral to be sanctified. Otherwise, he should find a real artist, not a wordsmith, to interpret it. The Wilsons of this world do gobbledegook. Turner does art.

Professor Etzioni is founder of the Communitarian Network.

Simon Jenkins

Driven his van into Mr Wilson's office, no doubt the police would have been called. But with Mrs Weiss at the wheel, an artist with a tankful of premium interpretation... Gentlemen, a masterpiece!

Perhaps we are too hard on Mr Wilson. Yesterday, in invoking the name of Duchamp, he also mentioned Turner. He said that "Turner also looked at landscape and saw art in it". Of that there is no denying. Had Turner passed along Kensington Road to his villa in Twickenham (incidentally his only work of architecture), he might have spotted the van. He might, implied Mr Wilson, have been uplifted as he was by the sight of the Fighting Temeraire or a steam train. He might have rushed to the Tate and entrusted to an earlier Mr Wilson. That Mr Wilson would have been a sterner task-master: "Come now, Mr Turner. I can see

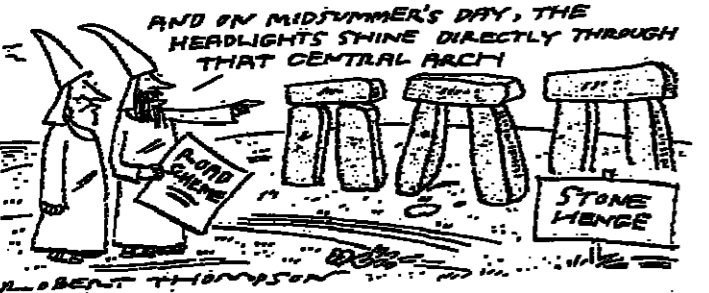
Space oddity

WAS David Duchovny really sitting next to the Prince of Wales during last month's pop concert in Hyde Park or was it actually an alien beamed to Earth in the guise of the *X-Files* actor? I ask because Duchovny has given diametrically opposed descriptions of the conversation he had with the Prince about HRH's knowledge of the exploits of agents Mulder and Scully. Shortly after All Saints and Natalie Imbruglia had entertained the crowds at the Prince's Trust concert, Duchovny recalled that his host had said "he had watched the X-Files but found the plots a bit convoluted and couldn't always understand them".

Yet, in a strange twist which would have immediately alerted the extraterrestrial investigators to the fact that they were on the trail of a visitor from outer space, Duchovny now says the Prince had no idea who he was and even less about his television show. "He asked me what the show was about," the actor tells me. "I said maybe your sons watch and he said he would ask them when he got home that night. I like that he



didn't try to pretend." Either the man next to the Prince was an impostor from a spaceship, or HRH's spin-doctors, keen to impress the public with their boss's grasp of teenage culture, briefed the actor who later had a memory lapse. The truth is out there.



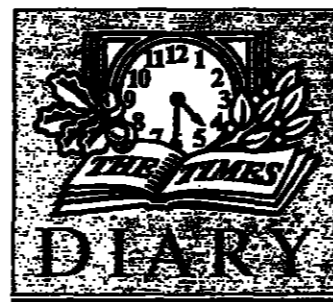
● RYAN GIGGS might be indelibly identified with Manchester but his heart remains firmly in Wales. The Manchester United ballsmith has spent £3,000 decorating the bottom of his 50ft indoor swimming pool with tiles depicting the Prince of Wales's feathers. By the standards of his peers, this counts as good taste.

Trashy tales

A BOOK about the "concerted and shadowy" dirty tricks campaign against John Prescott, written by the man at the centre of the affair, is being touted around publishers. Ian Achmed Newton was arrested over what Prescott termed "a vendetta". To celebrate the Crown Prosecution Service's decision not to take action against him, Newton has written *Dustbinger*. It describes how a group of "disaffected Labour voters" in Hull made life miserable for the Prescotts while clandestinely investigating Johnathan, the Deputy PM's son.

The manuscript has been studied by Verso, a London publishing house that produces left-wing literature. Sebastian Budge, from Verso, says: "It's fun and interesting." Newton accepts his new literary career might be criticised: "We knew we were going to be called gold-diggers. Whenever the working-class try to make money they are gold-diggers." No wonder Prescott left the brothers behind in Hull.

● RICHARD ASHCROFT (pictured) can't get no satisfaction. The sulky frontman of the Verve has



JASPER GERARD

been publicly venting his frustration with the Rolling Stones after the two groups had a legal run-in. Bitter Sweet Symphony, the Verve's classic tune, sounded so similar to an obscure Sixties orchestral treatment of a Stones song that the band had to hand over all its publishing royalties from the tune. Although he lost out, Ashcroft has



been showing his dissatisfaction during his American tour. By sporting instead a T-shirt which reads "Who the f--- is Mick Jagger?"

Making good

HISTORY has come full circle for Professor Arthur Lucas. The Principal of King's College London, who emigrated from Australia in 1980, today becomes head of Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital Medical Schools. In 1818, Joseph Varney, his great-great-grandfather, was transported to Australia for stealing two silver teaspoons from a pawnbroker within the shadow of Guy's. "I ask my students to work out how many of my genes come from convicts. The answer is one eighth: I have other criminals in my past."

● MORE signs of the death of "Cool Britannia". GSI Productions, the theatre company that pioneered shows such as *Fever Pitch* and *Trainspotting*, has ceased trading. Perhaps it should have stuck with Shakespeare.

Walkout

ONLY days after his promotion into the Government, Charles Clarke has incited a revolt among Whitehall chauffeurs. A keen rambler, the Junior Education Minister has shunned his courtesy car to walk to work, denying his driver the chance of overtime. He has a lot to learn: Whitehall chauffeurs are even more frightening than permanent secretaries.



BARRY NORMAN'S decision to quit his black chair and move on to pastures new has triggered a somewhat undignified behind-the-scenes scramble to replace him. First among those pushing the BBC to consider them for the role of presenter of *Film 98* is A.A. Gill, the self-consciously controversial *Sunday Times* critic.

"His agent has been pestering us for weeks now to try to get the job," says a large reel on the programme. "Gill has been determined to have a screen test." His recent run-in with the Welsh, whom he described as "ugly, pugnacious little trolls", gives a sense of what we might expect should he succeed Norman.

Mark Kermode, the rather more restrained film reviewer for Radio 1, has, I am told, also shown an interest. Popular among youngsters, his appointment would indicate the Beeb's desire to reach out to a less mature audience. Other names known to be in the frame include Kirsty Young, Jonathan Ross and Mariella Frostrup.

Intriguingly, a dark horse in the race is a Norman Jr. Samantha is Barry's daughter and a presenter herself. White still young and relatively unknown, she has inherited many of her father's finer points (irony, a dry sense of humour) and would, one hopes, continue her father's traditions. And why not?

Professor Etzioni is founder of the Communitarian Network.



IN SEARCH OF BLAIR

A decent Government without a defining mission

After a reshuffle and a report to the nation Tony Blair must feel entitled to some relaxation. The Prime Minister has abandoned Whitehall for Tuscany. He leaves behind a Government that, according to his supporters, has been refashioned in his own image with a record that, in Mr Blair's own words, represents an encouraging start. At this stage last year, with his resounding landslide triumph fresh, it seemed that Mr Blair was at the height of his powers. It was widely assumed that his almost unnatural popularity would at least fray at the edges. Although there have been mishaps en route, the Government and Prime Minister still dominate British politics 12 months later. Mr Blair's honeymoon has lasted longer than many modern marriages.

Yet the annual report that Downing Street issued on Thursday brought ridicule. It is far from clear that the cost of such a document should have been supported by the taxpayer. Some of the manifesto "pledges" solemnly recorded were little more than shapeless aspirations. The Government's definition of a policy "success" would not stand up to independent audit in the commercial sector. There are some spectacular sins of omission. This exercise is not unrepresentative. It catches the spirit of an administration whose energy remains a distinctive and impressive feature. The comparison with its exhausted predecessor remains striking.

If Mr Blair's contention that his Government has made a "decent start" is defensible, his confidence that "we have a clear sense of direction" is rather more debatable. Some individual departments and initiatives offer such clarity: the Government as a whole does not. The reshuffle may have strengthened the Blairites but it has shed no further light on Blairism. The much heralded "Third Way" remains more of a slogan than a compass. None of this matters for the moment. An expanding economy, astute communications and an Opposition that remains unwilling fully to renounce the Major era may sustain the Government's opinion poll ratings for some time.

This fortunate formula will not last for ever. Even if it did, it would not be enough. For politics is about purpose as well as popularity. The degree to which any Government can embody a philosophy is

often exaggerated. What came to be known as "Thatcherism" started life as a set of responses to particular and pressing policy problems. It was in no sense a coherent ideological project. That does not mean that it lacked any central strategy or consistent principles. Margaret Thatcher stood for the reassertion of government authority and the expansion of market economics. That agenda was implemented in fits and starts but few doubted her ambitions.

Mr Blair has the opportunity to emulate her success. Although the term "Third Way" has been much mocked, it is not irrelevant. A modernised political party of the Centre-Left should seek a new state sector that does somewhat less, differently and better. That objective could draw together the whole Blair programme. It could provide the link between effective education action zones, Welfare to Work and fundamental reform of the social security system. It might even bring the detached and distinctly ad hoc proposals for constitutional reform within a coherent framework. It would provide what the Government's report did not: a yardstick against which to measure achievement.

The alternative is a combination of high-profile bids and pieces coupled with an obsessive concentration on public relations. The Government could occupy its time with micropolitics and macro-spin. Some of its activities would doubtless be worthwhile in themselves. They would not be especially important nor would they represent a consistent whole. To fill that vacuum and earn his radical spurs, Mr Blair could find himself adopting proportional representation and a single currency less out of conviction than convenience. This would be the worst of all possible worlds.

The Prime Minister has a choice between two recent examples: the Conservative Governments of the 1950s and 1980s. The former were often popular and won reelection with relatively little effort. It is almost impossible to recall what they achieved in domestic policy. The latter were much more controversial. They did, however, have a fundamental effect on the country. It is to be hoped that Mr Blair has the happiest of holidays. He will return to a team of his own making. He must decide whether he intends to be a Centre-Left version of Harold Macmillan or Mrs Thatcher.

PASSAGE FROM INDIA

Our Man Abroad is becoming a different beast

Sir David Gore-Booth is a diplomat's diplomat. Smart, witty, proud and cultured, he embodies much of the mandarin tradition that the Foreign Office now wants to change. The pedigree, once impeccable, is now suspect: the son of a peer, Eton and Oxford and an Arabist, he finds himself in the very seat that his father occupied a generation ago as Her Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner to India. But what seemed an effortless rise has come to a sudden end: Sir David, now 55, is to leave the Foreign Office at the end of the year and take a job in the private sector.

India occupies a special place in British history and diplomacy. But it was not always a happy one for those who sailed out to make their fortune where the dawn comes up like thunder. Some returned laden with jewellery and glory, others came home to ostracism or disgrace. Warren Hastings was a broken man after seven years of impeachment proceedings. Clive, the conqueror who laid India at Britain's feet, ended his life with a penknife.

Sir David's, less dramatic, departure reflects a world changed utterly since Britain's imperial adventure. He insists he is leaving at his own request as he is looking for a new challenge. Few will wholly believe him, certainly not in India. The controversy over last year's state visit by the Queen was exploited by the Indian press and some politicians to accuse Britain of patronising

interference in Indian affairs. Sir David showed a frankness not common in diplomats when he declared that "Indian politicians should stop tilting at windmills". A campaign of vilification began to whisper around Delhi: the new nationalists who have taken India into nuclear isolation will see his departure as proof that his diplomacy has failed.

Under pressure, Robin Cook professed confidence in his High Commissioner: but it was the kind of deadly compliment that presages a permanent exclusion from the inside track. Sir David's political antennae were sensitive enough to realise that he is not the new face of new Labour. Anyone who can remember the dismissiveness with which Sir David answered the Scott committee could predict that a Foreign Secretary who established his credentials with the arms-to-Iraq affair might see him as not "one of us".

If, however, Sir David is to be taken at his word — a risky proposition with a diplomat — he has thrust a sword into his current employer's reputation. Today's egalitarian Foreign Office, it must be presumed, has no place for last year's high fliers or the sons of former Permanent Under-Secretaries. And just as businessmen are being press-ganged into becoming Business Ambassadors for Britain, so real ambassadors appear eager to escape their chanceries and move into the real world of business.

MAKE A PIG OF YOURSELF

The public should demand British pork

Not since Lord Emsworth fretted for the wellbeing of the Empress of Blandings have pig farmers been so perturbed. First it was hill farming, then it was the beef industry, and now British pig keepers are under threat. True, their industry has always been subject to sudden swings of fortune. One moment farmers have been like pigs in clover; the next they are staring like the metaphorical stuck pig. Phases of production and prices have always vacillated. But now a silk purse has turned back into a sow's ear. A current pork glut in Europe is emphasised by a sharp downturn in the once lucrative Far Eastern market. With the face of increasingly aggressive competition for oriental outlets from America, pork exports to the Far East have plummeted. Meanwhile, with sterling so strong, British producers find it hard to hold their own in European markets. British pig rearers will be pushed out of business unless they can win the loyalty of their customers.

Pig production is not subsidised. It is up to the public to support the breeders, who themselves have adapted their farming methods to suit popular demand. Britain is alone in Europe in having phased out the cramped stall and tether system in which pigs are imprisoned in narrow pens affording space only to stand and lie down. A

nation nurtured on the Tale of Pigting Bland, on the fairy story of the Three Little Pigs or the sentiment of *Charlotte's Web*, has rightly recognised the intelligence and sensitivity of the porcine breed. By the beginning of next year, inhumane methods of housing will be completely banned. But British farmers investing in new units, in more spacious straw pens or fields where pigs can root and roam, now have no spare money to tide them over the current crisis. The piggy bank is empty.

British pork is an increasingly healthy product. For several years, Britain's pig farmers have been prohibited from using the bonemeal feedstuffs which spread BSE among cattle. Farms are inspected on a quarterly basis by veterinary surgeons who file meticulous reports. Careful breeding has also, in response to public demand, produced a lean, unfat meat. So it is time to save the bacon of Britain's industry by demanding home-grown pork: York ham, Cumberland sausage, Melton Mowbray pork pies should pile the meat-eaters plate. For the more adventurous gourmet there are chitterlings, trotters and brawn, delicious with cornichons. Already Britons are consuming three times more pork than they were 40 years ago. But now, if they want to reward their farmers for adapting to their demands, they must go the whole hog.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Democrat's doubt on Clinton's future

From Mr William Soszki

Sir, As a New England Democrat, I think Anatole Kaletsky may be being over-optimistic about President Clinton's latest self-imposed predicament (article, "Monica's gift to Bill", July 30).

Mr Clinton might evade impeachment proceedings, but his party cannot be expected to escape the eminent good sense shown twice by our electorate in the past two congressional elections. We placed Republicans in control of both the House of Representatives and the Senate for the first time in four decades and then retained them.

Millions of Democrats — including those who, unlike me, voted a second time for Mr Clinton — contributed to the election of Republican congresses and will more than likely seat a third in November for precisely the same reason. We refuse to allow Clinton, or, in the event, substitute-President Gore to exhumate the absurd political correctness and related profligacy of Mr Clinton's first two years in office. It was those disastrous policies, not a tight-winding conspiracy, that cost the Democrats control of Congress, and thus the nation's purse-strings and morale.

It was an effective opposition, elected in mid term, which under the British electoral system is sadly not possible, that frogmarched Mr Clinton into the fiscal probrity that underlies the prosperity for which he now seeks credit.

As to the Monica Lewinsky affair, we will see what, if any, evidence of presidential perjury and suborning of perjury emerges and, furthermore, whether it reveals a pattern of obstruction of justice by the Clintons, going back a decade to Arkansas.

Contrary to Mr Kaletsky's suggestion, the United States Constitution again shines especially brightly in crisis as it has done for two centuries. It is a mistake for journalists and, especially, Presidents to believe the tumult of American politics in any way undermines our collective power and individual freedoms, as Richard Nixon did and Mr Clinton apparently does.

Whether or not the American public might forgive Mr Clinton for any charges of impeachable activities that might materialise, we cannot be expected to reward him or his party for them.

Yours sincerely,
WILLIAM SOSZKI,
wsoszki@compuserve.com
July 30.

Tour de France

From Mr Jonathan Bates

Sir, Your leading article, "Tour de France" (July 31), criticises the Tour de France cyclists for their reaction to their treatment by police, suggesting that their indignation should be directed at themselves. This seems grossly unfair.

Their reaction, which I believe has been dignified and relatively muted, is against the heavy-handed way in which the matter is being handled. They are being treated in a way that would not be accepted in most sports. Let us imagine how the media would have responded if, on the eve of the World Cup semi-finals, members of the Holland team had been forcibly taken from their hotel, subjected to compulsory medical checks, and detained. This is the equivalent of the treatment meted out to members of the Dutch TVM team.

The French police have humiliated men in the middle of a major sporting event, one that places great strains upon them. It is unsurprising that some of them have simply said that it is not worth going on and have withdrawn.

I rather suspect that you or I would feel the same way if, after cycling 3,000 kilometres, we had been pulled from hotel rooms and our beds. Of course the drug issue must be investigated — and resolved — but this is not the way to do it.

Yours sincerely,
JONATHAN BATES,
1 Park Terrace,
Minchinghamton,
Gloucestershire GL6 9DU.
July 31.

Church baptisms

From Mr Tony Green

Sir, I was interested to see the Government's proposals for alternative "baptisms" in register officers (reports and leading article, July 24). I was not surprised that baptisms in the Church of England have fallen drastically and suggest the Church should take some responsibility for this.

In 1995 I visited the local parish vicar in South London, where my family were then living, to ask about having my baby daughter baptised. Although I had attended the church on a number of occasions I was not a regular member of the congregation. The curate said that the policy of that church was only to baptise children of regular attendees and that they would not baptise my daughter. There was no evidence of baptism being the "bridge" between Church and community that the Bishop of Wakefield appears to believe exists.

Soon after, I met the bishop who has responsibility for that parish, and

was amazed to be told by him that the Church of England had no clear policy on baptism and that individual vicars had complete control over who was or was not baptised in their church. The bishop's advice was to visit neighbouring parishes in search of a vicar with different views. This I refused to do and so, sadly, my daughter remains unbaptised.

Yours faithfully,
TONY GREEN,
2 Toneridge Drive,
High Wycombe,
Buckinghamshire HP13 6JH.
July 26.

From the General Secretary of the National Secular Society

Sir, The Bishop of Wakefield, com-

Germany's wartime resistance effort

From the Reverend Professor Emeritus W. H. C. Friend, FBA

Sir, Daniel Johnson's article ("Why did we hesitate to kill Hitler?", July 24) see also letters, July 27) raised questions about the morale of the German people in the summer of 1944 and the aims of the German opposition to Hitler. Seen from Italy at that time, the death of Hitler would not necessarily have ended the war. German popular opinion had rallied to Hitler as the result of the bombings (as had that of the British to Churchill in 1940); but there were also deep divisions among senior officers and officials.

By July 15 at least four of the best informed sources of the Psychological Warfare Branch in Rome (where I was serving as an intelligence officer) had indicated that Ernst von Weizsäcker, German Ambassador to the Vatican and previously State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry, intended to "approach the Allies" once the Russians had crossed the East Prussian border — for then the war would be lost irrevocably.

We awaited events. On July 21-22 von Weizsäcker's embassy put themselves "at Allied disposal", being one of the few surviving cells in the anti-Hitler plot. The First Secretary, Albrecht von Kessel, related to me his history and aims. Peace was to have been made with all the Allies, not only the Western powers, on the basis of Germany retaining her 1937 frontiers, plus Austria, who would decide her future by plebiscite in five years' time.

In the meantime, German policy would be slanted towards Anglo-German understanding. Later interviews provided further useful information, not least about the attitude of von Papen, then Ambassador in the highly sensitive Ankara post.

On August 29 we were offered a complete rundown of the personnel and views of the German Embassy to Fascist Italy at Fasanò. The offer was referred to Allied Forces Headquarters, where Harold Macmillan, the Minister Resident, refused it. He was reported to us as believing that the war would be over in October, and as not wishing to be saddled with obligations towards "Badoglio Germans".

This may have been justified at the time; less justified was the BBC's broadcast of the names of the conspirators. This resulted in the execu-

tion of very many pro-British officials and officers, including Adam von Trott zu Solz.

At the end of the war the Allies found themselves obliged to trust Konrad Adenauer, a former Rhineland separatist and francophile. His legacy today is the current Franco-German axis that dominates the EU and is indifferent and even hostile to British interests.

Yours faithfully,
W. H. C. FRIEND,
Gonville and Caius College,
Cambridge CB2 3TA.
July 25.

From Mr Alistair Horne

Sir, Daniel Johnson was right to suggest that it would have been much better if the Germans had killed their Führer, and that we had supported them.

Like many of the SOE's schemes, which cost the lives of heroic operatives in occupied Europe, the proposals recently released sound hopelessly airy-fairy. What hope would a British agent, disguised ineptly in an obsolete German uniform, have had of getting close enough to the world's most protected nasty in the world to stick an anthrax-loaded needle into him? And had a British assassination attempt even succeeded, what fertile ground for a new "stab-in-the-back" legend.

Yet there was a perfectly good German resistance, admirably placed to kill Hitler. Why did we not support those superhumanly courageous Germans — like Stauffenberg, von dem Bussche and Adam Trott — who for years had been ready to act, sacrificing their own lives?

Our refusal to support these "good" Germans must remain one of the blots on Allied conduct of the war. It may have cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of Allied soldiers, and Jews in the camps.

Of course it can be argued that Churchill was shackled by Roosevelt's principle of unconditional surrender; but this was always a misguided commitment.

Yours faithfully,
ALISTAIR HORNE,
The Old Vicarage,
Turville, Henley-on-Thames,
Oxfordshire RG9 6QU.
July 26.

Bentley judgment

From Mr John Cooper

Sir, Before turning Mr Derek Bentley into some form of national hero, and condemning the memory of an outstanding Lord Chief Justice in the process, let us not forget that Bentley was involved in an armed robbery, a criminal, and hardly worthy of the sort of sympathy that your front page today expresses.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN COOPER,
Great Tompents,
Tompents Bank,
Forest Row, East Sussex RH18 5LN.
July 31.

Stolen treasure

From Miss Gertrud Seidmann

Sir, Last week's disappearance of a copper sculpture of a bird's skull was not the first theft of a work of art from the Royal Academy (report, In brief, July 25). In November 1965, an engraved gem, the diploma work of Nathaniel Marchant, which had been in the Academy's care since 1809, was stolen from a frame hanging in the Secretary's office. The choosy thief left behind Edward Burch's emblematic gem of Neptune (the very first diploma work, delivered in 1771), which was mounted in the same frame.

As Marchant's cast was also taken, all that is left are two holes in the velvet backing: these indicate that it was Marchant's largest gem, an oval measuring approximately 37mm x 27mm. Perhaps it would still be worthwhile for museum curators, dealers and private owners to search their collections for this vanished masterpiece?

Yours truly,
GERTRUD SEIDMANN
(Research associate),
Institute of Archaeology,
36 Beaumont Street, Oxford OX1 2PG.
July 27.

Comic cuts

From Mr Jack Clayton

Sir, Your report, "Victoria Wood to lead BBC comedy revival" (July 29), suggests that, for the first time, the BBC will use the American system of altering the transmitted programme's script to reflect earlier studio audience reaction to the jokes.

In the early 1960s *The Sid Caesar Show*, starring the American comedian, was transmitted live from the BBC's Shepherd's Bush Empire. The technical crew, of which I was one, found that our reaction to the show during the final run-through was important. If we didn't laugh at a sketch it was replaced by another, which then had to be performed un rehearsed before a theatre audience and an enormous viewing public.

This was stressful and naturally disliked, so we brushed up on our belly laughs and quickly — and successfully — learnt to react positively to the rehearsed material.

Yours faithfully,
JACK CLAYTON,
Brook House,
Sweetham, Suffolk IP17 2BN.
Jack@clayto.keme.co.uk
July 29.

Stage directions

From Mr John S. Price

Sir, I write to commiserate with the sartorially induced confusion experienced by your correspondents (July 23 and 27). When appearing in court, I wear traditional lawyers' outfits of black jacket, waistcoat and striped trousers. Whilst travelling to and from, I have been variously mistaken for an undertaker, a master at Eton College, a head waiter, or a station master (several times) and, on one happy occasion while riding on the platform of a Number 23 from the Strand, as a bus conductor.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN S. PRICE,
10 Launceston Avenue,
Caversham, Reading RG4 6SW.
jprice8172@aol.com

From Mr Rodney B. Spokes

Sir, At least Mr P. R. Davis, standing on the steps of a London theatre, was only asked for directions.

In the early Sixties I was in the foyer of a Monaco hotel at the end of the Monte Carlo Rally, proudly wearing my new racing overalls, which were just starting to be worn for international rallies.

A guest asked me to collect his cases from his room.

Yours faithfully,
RODNEY SPOKES
(Vice-Chairman, International Rally Drivers Club),
155 Scepton Lane, Leicestershire LE5 2FF.

From Mr Martin R. Davies

Sir, About 20 years ago, in the foyer of the Opera House in Budapest, I found I could read the figures but not the wording on my ticket. I approached a doorman in his imposing uniform and sought directions. He looked none too pleased at first but did show me towards my seat with a smile.

I was truly glad that I had not offered him a tip when, a few moments later, I observed him taking his seat in what I imagine had once been the Royal Box, in company with a number of other high-ranking officers of the Hungarian Army.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN R. DAVIES,
7 Smyth Street, Bridge Road,
Leigh Woods, Bristol BS8 3PE.
July 28.

Much for comfort in Gibbons classic

From Mrs Shirley Andrews

Sir, Like Malcolm Bradbury ("Taking comfort in a classic", Books, July 23) I never met Stella Gibbons. But I have a long, jolly letter from her written in bright blue ink. It was January 1970 and I had written to ask her for some background information on *Cold Comfort Farm*, a set text for my A-level pupils. She wrote:

There seemed to be then an impression among novelists that people felt more, in the country, and had Wilder Passions. This irritated me. I saw the country as Virgil did: a beautiful place that worked for its living, not a background for over-seeing morons.

It is a parody of Mary Webb, I was working on the *Evening Standard*, and we serialised — I think — *The Golden Arrow*, which amused and irritated me very much. But it's also a parody of the Powys brothers' books with a few digs at D. H. Lawrence on the side.

I wrote it when I had a broken heart (the usual young man ... when I was overweight, timid, and reserved, but would have liked to be like Flora Poste).

The most interesting point comes at the end of her letter:

You could tell your pupils, if you care to, that the book comes from deep levels. J. I. M. Innes wrote: "unless you have seen something nasty in the woodshed, you can't produce authentic satire", or words to that effect. ... I had seen some very nasty things — adultery, alcoholism, neurosis, bullying and betrayal. I got back at them by laughing.

In a PS she wrote: "The heart mended successfully — very successfully."

Yours sincerely,
SHIRLEY ANDREWS,
4 Watford Close, Cranley Road,
Guldford, Surrey GU1 2EP.
July 24.

Constitutional reform

From Professor P. R. D. Corrigan

Sir, Peter Riddell ("The oracle of Westminster", July 27) is comprehensive and astute in his assessment of the Government's programme on constitutional reform, but he omits to mention one crucial change — the proposed eight regional development agencies in England.

Over the past month, in advance of legislation, the appointments of chief executives for such agencies have been widely advertised — eg, in *The Times* of July 16. The further details provided to respondents reveal that the "process of identifying RDA board members is underway". In addition, London "will also have its own development agency", part of a "new city-wide strategic authority".

I presume this relates to an elected mayor for London: the eight other chief executives are to be appointed. These RDAs will "relate" to existing regional government offices (appointed officials) and have significant strategic powers.

Where is democracy here? Where is responsible representative government?

Yours faithfully,
P. R. D. CORRIGAN,
75 Kenmare Road, Bristol BS4 1PF.
July 27.

Go east
on Sir
Mr Blair

Amitai Etan
proper
imprope

t

t

t

t

t

t

هكذا من للإصل



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE July 31: The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh today visited Cheshire and were received at Ellesmere Port Station by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Cheshire (Mr William Bromley Davenport). Her Majesty and His Royal Highness met those working at the Station and members of the local community and were entertained to Lunch. The Queen later visited the new industrial therapy and rehabilitation units at Hollins Park Hospital, Warrington, and was received by the Chairman, Warrington Community Health Care Trust (Mr John Gartside) and the Mayor of Warrington (Councillor Albert Clemow). The Duke of Edinburgh this morning visited BT Call Centre, Gemini Business Park, Warrington. His Royal Highness this afternoon opened the new Science Centre at the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils' Darbustrey site, Warrington. ST JAMES'S PALACE July 31: The Prince of Wales today visited the headquarters of the British Trust for Ornithology in Thetford, Norfolk. THATCHED HOUSE LODGE RICHMOND PARK July 31: Princess Alexandra, accompanied by the Rt Hon Sir Angus Ogilvy, this afternoon took the Salute at a performance of the Royal Tournament at Earls Court, London.

Royal engagements TODAY: The Duke of Edinburgh will attend a session of the XVII International Congress of Comparative Law at Bristol University at 10.30; and as Admiral will open the new club house and attend a dinner at the Royal Southern Yacht Club, Hambro, Southampton, at 7.00. TOMORROW: The Duke of Edinburgh, as Admiral, will visit the Royal Southern Yacht Club, Hambro, at 9.40.

Baron Clarke of Hampstead The life barony conferred upon Mr Anthony James Clarke has been gazetted by the name, style and title of Baron Clarke of Hampstead, of Hampstead in the London Borough of Camden.

Baron Warner The life barony conferred upon Mr Norman Reginald Warner has been gazetted by the name, style and title of Baron Warner, of Brockley in the London Borough of Lewisham.

Legal appointment Mr John Royce, QC, has been elected Leader of the Western Circuit from October 1.

Weekend birthdays TODAY: Mr Lionel Bart, composer, 68; Mr Derek Birdsall, graphic designer and typographer, 64; Miss Janet Gough, High Mistress, 58; Mr Frank Hauser, theatre director, 76; Dr David Jasper, former Principal, St Chad's College, Durham, 47; Sir Richard Lloyd Jones, former civil servant, 65; Professor M. S. Lowy, Emeritus Professor of Medicine, St James's University Hospital, Leeds, 67; Major-General R.C. Macdonald, 87; Professor W.H. Morris-Jones, former director, Institute of Commonwealth Affairs, 80; Professor Sir John Pattison, Vice-Provost, University College London Medical School, 55; Professor B.C. Roberts, Emeritus Professor of Industrial Relations, London School of Economics, 81; M Yves Saint Laurent, fashion designer, 62; the Right Rev Professor Stephen Sykes, Bishop of Ely, 59; Professor Laurie Taylor, sociologist, 62; Mr Robert Thomas, sculptor, 72; Lord Tomlinson, MEP, 59; Mr G.E. Ward Thomas, former chairman, Yorkshire-Tyne Television, 75.

Marriages

Mr M.T.G. Cobb and Miss C.L. Chegwain The marriage took place on Saturday, July 25, 1998, in the Priory Church of Saint Mary, Monmouth, between Mr Matthew Thomas George Cobb, son of the Rev and Mrs Peter Cobb of Wye, Good, Monmouth, and Miss Celia Louise Chegwain, daughter of Mr and Mrs Robert Chegwain of Cymrod, Cardiff. Canon James Courts and the Rev Peter Cobb, father of the bridegroom, officiated. The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Agnes Bridget, Cecily and Dorothy Tomlinson with baby Edmund John Mansel Tomlinson, Miranda, Madeline and Peter Jackson, and Miss Emily Hayes. Mr John Flood was best man. A reception was given at Habonwydd, Monmouth School for Girls and the honeymoon is being spent in Crete. Mr G. Hygate and Miss P.S. Whitley The marriage took place on Saturday, June 13, at Church of the Good Shepherd, Murreyfield, Edinburgh, of Graham, son of Mr and Mrs John Hygate, of Nottinghamshire, to Pauline, daughter of the late Mr John Whitley and of Mrs Catherine (Natalie) Doyle, of Edinburgh, and stepdaughters of Dr David Doyle. The Rev Canon David Rimmer officiated. Mr T. Woodcock and Miss L.M.H. King The marriage took place on Saturday, July 11, at St Michael and All Angels, West Overton, Wiltshire, between Mr Thomas Woodcock, son of Mr and Mrs Thomas Woodcock, of Hurst Green, Lancashire, to Miss Lucinda Mary Harnsworth King, daughter of the late Mr and Mrs Michael King, of Lockeridge, Wiltshire. The bride, who was given in marriage by her brother, Mr Jonathan King, was attended by David and Alasdair Wilson. Mr Ludovic de Waden was best man.



Lucianne Wainwright and Mark Warde-Norbury, of Clapham Common, London, who have recently announced their engagement

Service dinners

Bythe Sappers Colonel and Mrs R. Watt were the principal guests at a dinner given by the Bythe Sappers last night in the Royal Engineers' Headquarters Mess, Chatham. Sapper F.G. Barton presided.

To Colonel Robin Greenham Colonel R.G. Greenham attended a dinner given in his honour by Officers, Warrant Officers and Senior NCOs of the Defence Attaché wing of the British Embassy in Moscow, to mark his retirement from the Army. Air Commodore M.L. Fernan presided.

Essex Army Cadet Force Colonel J.S. Houston, Lieutenant-Colonel W.L.M. Allan and Major G.E.F. Green were the principal guests at a dinner of the Essex Army Cadet Force held last night at the Altair Training Camp, Liverpool. Lieutenant-Colonel M.J. Wreford, President of the M.E.S. Committee, presided. Colonel C.A.F. Thomas, Cadet Commandant, was present.

Anniversaries

TODAY BIRTHS: Richard Henry Dana, novelist, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1815; Herman Melville, writer, New York, 1819; James Grant, novelist, Edinburgh, 1822. DEATHS: Queen Anne, reigned 1702-14, London, 1714; Richard Savage, poet, Bristol, 1743; Elizabeth Inchbald, novelist, dramatist and actress, London, 1821; Robert Morrison, founder of Protestant missions in China, Canton, 1834; Walter Ulbricht, chairman, Council of State, German Democratic Republic 1960-73, East Berlin, 1973. Nelson defeated the French at the Battle of the Nile, 1798. Slavery was abolished in the British Empire, 1834. Germany declared war on Russia, 1914. The Warsaw Rising began, 1944.

TODAY DEATHS: William II (Rufus), reigned 1087-1100, New Forest, Hampshire, 1100; Thomas Galtsborough, painter, London, 1788; Jacques Montorgueil, pioneer of ballooning, Annonay, France, 1799; "Wild Bill" Hickok, US Marshal, murdered, Deadwood, Dakota, 1876; Marcus Clarke, writer, Melbourne, 1881; Enrico Caruso, tenor, Naples, 1921; Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone, Brantford, Nova Scotia, 1922; Warren Harding, 29th American President, 1921-23, San Francisco, 1933; Paul von Hindenburg, President of the Weimar Republic, 1925-34. Neudach, 1934; Louis Bérlioz, composer, Paris, 1936; Pietro Mascagni, composer, Rome, 1945; Wallace Ste-

vens, poet, Hartford, Connecticut, 1955; Fritz Lang, film director, Los Angeles, 1976; Carlos Chavez, composer, Mexico, 1978. Death duties were introduced into Britain, 1894. Iraq invaded Kuwait, 1990.

The Institute of Masters of Wine

Mr A.D. Hanson has been elected as the Chairman of the Institute of Masters of Wine for 1998/99. The following have passed the 1998 Master of Wine Examination held simultaneously in London, San Francisco and Sydney in May: Barbara Abraham (UK), Gerard Bassac (UK), Robert Bax (USA), Juliet Bruce-Jones (UK), Jan De Clercq (Belgium), Sally Baston (UK), Patrick Farrell (USA), D.C. Flynn (USA), Elizabeth Gabay (UK), David Hesketh (UK), Rose Murray Brown (UK), Drew Noon (USA), Alison Quintell (UK), Josef Schuller (Austria), Nicholas Sowiak (UK).

Forthcoming marriages

Mr J.S. Chambers and Miss C.A. Mitchell The engagement is announced between Julian Simon, eldest son of Mr and Mrs J.S. Chambers, of Crumley, Surrey, and Claire Andrea, daughter of Mr and Mrs Paul Mitchell, of East Haring, West Sussex. Mr N.C. Gee and Miss G.L. Napoli The engagement is announced between Nicholas, son of Mr and Mrs Philip A. Gee of Wokingham, Berkshire, and Gina, eldest daughter of Dr and Mrs Joseph C. Napoli, of Englewood, New Jersey, USA. Dr J.C.H. Harwick The engagement is announced between James, eldest son of Dr and Mrs Richard Harwick, of Passfield, Hampshire, and Eva Mirville, only daughter of Dr and Mrs A.J.C. van Steckenburg, of Coes and Amsterdam. Mr S.J.C. Hill and Miss P. Kohan The engagement is announced between Simon, elder son of Mr J.A.C. Hill and Mrs N.L. White-Smith, both of London, and Patricia, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs T.J. Krohn, of Taunton, Somerset. Mr C. Scarelli and Miss R. Boyce The engagement is announced between Keith, son of Mr and Mrs R.M. Stewart, of Essex, and Katherine, daughter of Professor and Mrs R.C. Whitfield, of Lyme Regis. Mr N.I. Tilley and Miss J.P. Buggy The engagement is announced between Nicholas, younger son of Mr Stephen Tilley, of Bristol, and Mrs Elizabeth Rose, of Somerset, and Mrs Jane, daughter of Mr and Mrs Jack Buggy, of Bath.

Mr P.T. Gilles and Miss F.S. Lacroix The engagement is announced between Patrick, only son of Mr and Mrs T.J. Gilles, of Great Waltham, Essex, and Frances, only daughter of Mr and Mrs R.J.O. Lacroix, of Hatherleigh, Devon, and Mrs J. Allen, of Fulham, London. Mr T.J. Kennedy and Miss E.J. Olden The engagement is announced between Timothy Joseph, youngest son of Mr and Mrs James Kennedy, of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, USA, and Elizabeth Jane, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Norman Olden, of Burnham, Buckinghamshire. Mr S.R. McManis and Miss A.R. King The engagement is announced between Stuart, younger son of Mr David McManis and Mrs Esther Mansell-Smith, of Cranbrook, Kent, and Anna, daughter of Mr and Mrs J.A. King, of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. Mr J.R. McWilliams and Miss A.L. Woodbury The engagement is announced between Jamie, younger son of Mr and Mrs John McWilliams, of Killybegs, Co. Down, and Anne Louise, youngest daughter of Mr Edwin Woodbury, of Brisbane, Australia, and Mrs John Kyriakis, of Cranbrook, Kent. Mr A.L.L. Pulley and Miss J.D. Motley The engagement is announced between Adam, elder son of Mr and Mrs Ian Pulley, of Flarmstead, Hertfordshire, and Jocelyn, only daughter of Mr Peter Motley, of Pangbourne, Berkshire, and Mrs Diana Motley, of Haworth, Yorkshire. Mr M.M. White and Miss A.M. Edmondson The engagement is announced between Matthew, younger son of Mr and Mrs Francis White, of Atherbury, Oxfordshire, and Anne, daughter of Mr and Mrs Alan Edmondson, of Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middlesex.

Church of Scotland

The following appointments are announced by the Church of Scotland: INDUCTION The Rev Peter W. Nimmo, to High Carntyne, Glasgow. The Rev Sinclair B. Ferguson, to St George's Tron, Glasgow. The Rev Leslie G. Donaghy, to St Andrew's, Dumbarton. The Rev Malcolm Ramsay, to Pitlochry. ORDINATION AND INDUCTION The Rev Gordon Farquharson, to Dunfermline, Stenhousemuir. ORDINATION AND INDUCTION The Rev Maurice Dutch, as Assistant at Priesthill, and Nisshill, Glasgow.

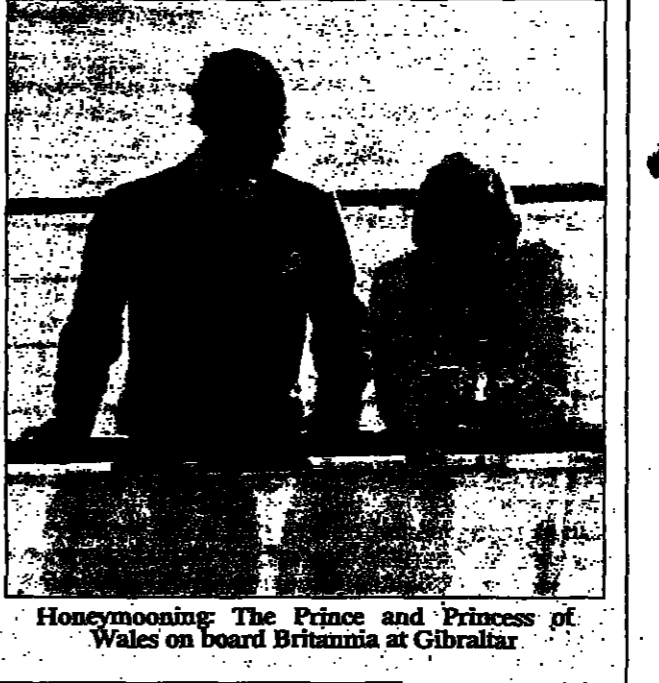
The Rev Mary Bell, as Assistant at Sherwood Greenlaw, Paisley. TRANSLATIONS The Rev Michael R.R. Sheeran, from Ratho to Auchtermuchty. The Rev Iain MacKenzie, from Carnegie with Loughmiller, Ewes and Westerkirk to Tarbat. RETIREMENTS The Rev Thomas O'Leary, from Lochmaben to Lochmaben. The Rev John G. Webster, from St John's Renfield, Glasgow. The Rev Alfred Bowie, from Alford with Keig with Tullynas and Forbes. The Rev J. Walter McGinty, from Alloway. The Rev John McCallum, from Camelon Irving, Falkirk.

GIBRALTAR IS SET FOR RIGHT ROYAL WELCOME

By TONY SAMSTAG VIRTUALLY the whole of Gibraltar's population of 27,000 is expected to line the route today as the Prince and Princess of Wales arrive for the start of their honeymoon cruise. They are to spend less than two hours there after the flight from Eastleigh airport, near Southampton, and are unlikely to leave their car until they board the royal yacht. Yesterday, the second day of their honeymoon, brought overcast skies with occasional rain and thunderstorms to Broadlands. The Hampshire mansion, near Romsey, with its 6,000-acre grounds has plenty of indoor facilities. Security at Broadlands was again tight with police dogs patrolling the grounds and uniformed police guarding all seven entrances. Police ejected one press photographer who got to within 450 yards of the

ON THIS DAY August 1, 1981

After two days spent at Broadlands, Earl Mountbatten of Burma's former home in Hampshire, the Prince and Princess of Wales continued their honeymoon on board Britannia. The King and Queen of Spain declined to attend the wedding in protest against the decision to set off from Gibraltar. An American team of reporters was understood to have tried to hire a boat to sail up the river past the house. Journalists waiting outside the gates were nevertheless praised by police yesterday for cooperating with the security teams. Chief Inspector Peter Kemp said there had been no breaches of security and "the majority of you have been very good and we are very pleased". It was learnt yesterday that on Thursday the Prince of Wales left his bride of a day to fish for salmon on the home stretch of the River Test. The Princess did not go with him, and he failed to catch anything. The appointment of a private secretary to the Princess was announced by Buckingham Palace yesterday. Mr Oliver Everett will also be controller to the Prince and Princess of Wales. The faces of the Prince and Princess of Wales were scarcely avoidable in Romsey yesterday. They decorated ashtrays, tea towels, flags and a thousand shop window photographs. But with the couple themselves, a few hundred yards down the road, it was a different story. One of the most tactful security nets protected the seclusion of the newly-married royal couple in their two-day retreat at Broadlands. Cars parking too close were moved on immediately. Police dogs were held in reserve so discreetly as to be almost invisible. The BBC said yesterday that 39 million people in Britain, or three-quarters of the population, had watched the royal wedding on television and it claimed two-thirds of that audience. The wedding was also seen abroad by 750 million viewers in 74 countries.



Honeymooning: The Prince and Princess of Wales on board Britannia at Gibraltar

BMDS: 0171 680 6880 PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

TRADE: 0171 481 9822 FAX: 0171 481 9313

BIRTHS... DEATHS... WANTED... TICKETS FOR SALE... BIRTHDAYS... ANNOUNCEMENTS... TRUSTEE ACTS... COURT & SOCIAL... 75 is no age to be leaving home... Rubba help elderly people preserve their privacy... 75 is no age to be leaving home.

DEATHS: EYRE - Charles passed away peacefully at the Meriton Hospital on July 28th 1998, aged 55 years. "Bones" was a devoted and loving husband, father and friend. He will be sadly missed by his family and friends. All love. Funeral service at Woodvale Crematorium (South Chapel) on Thursday August 6th at 2.30pm. No flowers by request. Donations please to The Meriton Hospital, c/o Teresa Baker, Carling Lodge, 155 Levers Road, Brighton, BN2 3LC. Tel: 01273 822222.

DEATHS: HAYES - Margaret of Chesham, wife of the late Mr Hayes, died on Monday August 1st 1998, aged 80 years. Cremation on July 29th 1998. Donations, if desired, to The Muscular Dystrophy Society, 16 Gyle Street, London W1P 7LG.

DEATHS: NEWMAN - On June 28th, 1998, Doris Irene, in her 81st year, much beloved wife of the late Mr Newman, and devoted mother of L.E. An inspiration to many people, she will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

DEATHS: MORRIS - Christopher Williams, on 27th July, peacefully in Wals, aged 58. Much loved father of Peter and Linda. Funeral service at St Peter and St Paul's Church, Shepton Mallet on 4th August at 2.30pm. Family flowers only.

TICKETS FOR SALE: W&A Debenture agent (20 years) for 1999. Telephone 01753 75073.

BIRTHDAYS: MARCHALL - Jennifer Elizabeth, 27. On the 27th August 1998, celebrating all my birthdays. Tel: 01273 565000.

COURT & SOCIAL: FORTHCOMING MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGES. Please send Court page announcements by post to Mrs J. Mason, Court & Social, The Times, PO Box 495, Virginia Water, Surrey, GU24 0AB. Tel: 0171 752 7720.

OBITUARIES

BINNIE BARNES

Binnie Barnes, actress, died on July 27, aged 95. She was born in London on March 25 1903.

Binnie Barnes was one of those film personalities who, while hardly ever achieving top billing or carrying a film by herself, gathered a strong personal following and was held in greater and more lasting affection than many a top star. Partly at least this was because, however dreary the film in which she was cast, she was sure to enliven it with her own brand of incisive humour and crisp sense of style. Frequently she played either the heroine's wisecracking sidekick (rather like Eve Arden), or the heroine's naughty-but-nice (or sometimes just naughty) rival for the hero's favours. If she did not usually get her man, that was not from any deficiency of allure, but simply because she was evidently much too resourceful and capable of standing on her own feet to look up adoringly at any hero, little woman to big man. Glamorous she was; tender and yielding she was not.

Also, some kind of malign fate seemed to dog her progress towards true leads, especially in Hollywood. The first time she went there with a contract in her pocket, just a month or so after she had married her first husband, the antiquarian bookseller Samuel Joseph, in 1932, she came back within a fortnight, pleading homesickness. The second time was in 1934, just after she had had a big success playing Catherine Howard in *The Private Life of Henry VIII*; she arrived with a contract from Metro and an understanding that she was going to replace Myrna Loy opposite William Powell in the *Thin Man* series of comedy-thrillers, but then she found that her visa did not permit her to work in the US and had to leave immediately. The following year she was back again, after being the brightest spot in Douglas Fairbanks Sr's final, British-made, film, *The Private Life of Don Juan*, and this time she stayed in Southern California for the rest of her life, a few film-making trips to Europe apart.

In all this her career closely paralleled that of Ida Lupino, the daughter of her principal early mentor and co-star Stanley Lupino. Stanley Lupino was in fact the first person to recognise Barnes's potential: though she had already made some 20 shorts, mostly musical or comical, and one feature film, called *A Night in Montmartre* (1931), her first big chance was in *Love Lies, a*



A 1932 publicity picture of Binnie Barnes, "the popular British film vamp"

comedy adapted from his own play by Stanley Lupino and directed by his cousin Lupino Lane. Barnes played a vamp determined, rather mysteriously, to captivate the puzzled hero (Lupino). This led directly to a series of 26 two-reeler comedies co-starring her and Lupino, as well as two features directed by Lupino Lane, a parody gangster melodrama called *The Innocents of Chicago*, and a farce called *Old Spanish Customers*.

None of this seemed to be getting her very far. Her father was a London policeman, and she was born Gertrude Maude Barnes. Though she went through a variety of teenage jobs, including milkmaid, kennel-rund and nurse, she always wanted to break into showbusiness, and seemed most likely to do it as a singer. After a spell as a cho-

rus girl she was promoted to her own spot in various revues before being noticed by Noel Coward, who gave her her first big break in the stage version of *Cavalcade* (1931). It was as a result of this that she obtained her first (abortive) Hollywood contract with Fox. Back in Britain she received the next big boost in her career when Alexander Korda cast her as the lively but ill-fated Catherine Howard opposite Charles Laughton in *The Private Life of Henry VIII*. After this she was promoted to co-star billing with Leslie Howard in *The Lady is Willing*, and then played a saucy serving wench in *The Private Life of Don Juan*. After that it was more or less straight off to Hollywood and a starring role in *There's Always Tomorrow* (1934), in which she played a (non-menacing, for once) other

woman opposite Frank Morgan. In *One Exciting Adventure*, a remake of a German Billy Wilder comedy-thriller, the same year, she was top-billed as a compulsive jewel thief, while in *Diamond Jim* she played Lillian Russell to Edward Arnold's Diamond Jim Brady. More typical of her usual range of roles was *Three Smart Girls* (1936), which made a star of Deanna Durbin: in that she played a witty, conniving gold-digger who has to be foiled in her attempts to catch Durbin's father. A brief return to Britain produced *The Divorce of Lady X*, in which Barnes played second fiddle to Laurence Olivier and Merle Oberon, but she shone in *The Last of the Mohicans* (1935), an unusually rustic role as Randolph Scott's love interest, *The Adventures*

of *Marco Polo* with Gary Cooper, and particularly as Milady DeWinter in Alan Dawn's semi-musical version of *The Three Musketeers* (1939), with the Ritz Brothers in the title roles. She never forgot that she was British, and in 1940 she played with a starry all-British cast in Noel Coward's *Tonight at 8.30* on stage in Los Angeles and San Francisco in aid of British War Relief. She also was able to show off her comic sense in *Three Girls About Town*, one of those stories where three sisters (Joan Blondell and Janet Blair were the other two) find a corpse in their hotel room and try to negotiate the comic complications which ensue.

Also in 1940 Barnes — her first marriage some years dissolved — met and married the producer Mike Frankovich, and became less active in showbusiness because of her wish to bring up their three children. All the same, she was definitely the jolliest part of a rather leaden adaptation for Hearst's McDaniel and Nelson Eddy of the Rodgers and Hart stage musical *I Married an Angel*, in which Barnes got to sing *A Twinkle in Your Eye*. In 1945 she gave Maureen O'Hara a run for her money in *The Spanish Main*, where Barnes played the pirate Anne Bonney and her rivalry with O'Hara for the affections of Paul Henreid was finally resolved in a knock-down, rolling-around-the-deck fight between the two women.

By this time Barnes was semi-retired, to the extent that two revered film encyclopaedias assumed that she was dead. Not so. She transplanted with Frankovich and their family to Italy in the early Fifties, and she appeared in two of the films he made there, *Fugitive Lady* and *Decameron Nights*. Frankovich was soon recalled to Hollywood to become a vice-president at Columbia, and Barnes took to television as a regular on *The Donna Reed Show*. In 1966 her path crossed that of Ida Lupino again, when she supported Rosalind Russell as a comical teaching nun in *The Trouble With Angels*, directed by Lupino. Later she reprised the role in a sequel, *When Angels Go — Trouble Follows*. Her last film was *40 Carats* (1973), in which she played Liv Ullmann's mother and was clearly the most glamorous person around.

After Frankovich's death in 1992, Barnes really did retire, though she remained active in several Hollywood charities. She is survived by two sons and a daughter.

LENNY McLEAN

Lenny McLean, pugilist and actor, died from cancer on July 28 aged 49. He was born on April 9, 1949.



McLean: from bareknuckle fighter to bestselling author

BOUNCER, bare-knuckle fighter and convicted criminal, Lenny McLean might so easily have gone down the road which leads to a life spent largely behind bars. But after being jailed for 18 months for assault (at the same time being found not guilty of murder) in a widely publicised case in 1992, he decided to go "straight", and made a new career for himself as a television and film actor.

In his heyday he had been one of the country's most successful bare-knuckle fighters, beating the best in the world and earning as much as £60,000 for a single bout. His autobiography, *The Guvnor*, just published, charts, in no-holds-barred East End demotic his course from a family background in which he was constantly victimised by his stepfather to a life of crime and notoriety in the prize ring. Stricken by both lung and brain cancer, McLean just failed to live to see the book, which was co-written with the crime writer Peter Gerrard, gain a place among the top ten bestsellers.

Lenny McLean was born in Hoxton, London N1, which, however, as he says in *The Guvnor*, "I and most people put slap bang in the East End of London". Later, the family moved to Bethnal Green. His father died when he was young, leaving his mother at the age of 24 to bring up five children. When she married again, her new husband adopted a "spare the rod, spoil the child" approach to his stepfamily, and there was constant hostility in the home.

McLean recalled his first paid fight, and his "purse" — threepence — provided by his mother. The opponent was the boy from downstairs who had been bullying McLean's young brother. McLean was under orders from his mother to "go down and sort out that bully" and did so in a bout that lasted scarcely three punches. McLean grew up into a mountain of a man, 6ft 3in tall and weighing twenty stone. He soon had a reputation as a man to call in if anyone needed "straightening out". Where before that, he and his friends had drifted into petty crime, and he served 18 months in Stamford Remand Centre from the age of 15.

After his release he tried to go straight by getting a job in a canteen. But his volcanic temperament made him a less than model apprentice, and he did not survive his first day.

Further crimes earned him another spell of detention, this time in Wormwood Scrubs.

But he was smart enough to realise the futility of a life spent in custody, and concentrated on his fighting abilities and the money they could earn him on the lucrative uncensored circuit. A bout with "Mad Gypsy" Bradshaw, in which McLean put his opponent in hospital after the latter had headbutted him before the fight, gained him great notoriety. On another occasion he was flown to New York to face the Mafia's champion, John McCormack. The fight lasted barely three minutes.

Out of the ring McLean was used by gangs in a variety of "heavy" operations. On one notable occasion he was used to intimidate an IRA-backed gang in a money-laundering fraud. McLean, who never went about his business "tooled up" (ie, armed) was shot on two occasions.

He was much in demand for bouncing and "minding" duties, but his nemesis came in 1992 when a man he had "back-handed" for exposing himself to young women in a nightclub subsequently died. McLean was charged with murder and for some time, as the trial at the Old Bailey seemed to be going against him, he thought he was looking at a 25-year jail sentence. But in the end he was acqui-

ted of murder, but convicted of actual bodily harm and sentenced to 18 months.

While languishing in the Category A wing of Brixton Prison he came to the conclusion that he ought to be doing something else. After a chance meeting with the comedian turned *EastEnders* star Mike Reid (they had bumped into each other while visiting Reggie Kray in Midstone Prison), he was persuaded to try his hand at acting. He was introduced to an agent and secured parts in two TV adverts before landing the role of the bootlegger Eddie Davies in LWT's *Customs and Excise* thriller series *The Knock*.

He subsequently had a part in the film *The Fifth Amendment*, with Bruce Willis, and starred in *Lock, Stock and Barrel*, shortly to be released, alongside Sting and the soccer star Vinnie Jones. Four months ago he was taken ill on holiday in Spain. Thinking he was merely suffering from a virus he carried on working. But cancer was diagnosed, and the doctors gave him no hope. He had been able to attend a book signing recently but died barely two weeks afterwards.

He is survived by his wife, Val, who had struck by him through thick and thin, and to whom he was utterly devoted. Their daughter and son also survive him.

EDWARD BEALE



Ted Beale in the grounds of West Lodge Park in 1987; he took particular pride in the arboretum he created there

Edward Beale, CBE, caterer and hotelier, died on July 10 aged 94. He was born on March 5, 1904.

BETWEEN the wars Beales of Holloway was a striking London landmark — its towering, ornate, pink, Gothic facade dominating a corner site on the main road, running from Islington to Highgate. Although it had started simply as a bakery, in its heyday it aspired to be a replica Fortnum & Mason, its various departments selling every variety of food — including surnames to be consumed on the premises. The Second World War gave a temporary boost to restaurants, with customers eager to eat out (at a maximum of five shillings a head) in order to save using their own precious ration coupons.

But Ted Beale, who had entered the family business straight from the City of London School in 1922, had the wit to see that this was a development unlikely to last — food

for those who ate out even after the war was pretty dismal and drab — unless something was done to improve standards. He decided to take up the challenge himself, becoming chairman of the Caterers Association and in 1950 joining the board of the British Travel Association (of which he served as deputy chairman from 1965 to 1970). The background to all this activity was the transformation of his own family firm from a charming, if declining, food emporium into a small group of hotels.

Immediately after the war he bought his first hotel — West Lodge Park, nestled in the Hertfordshire countryside near Hatfield Wood. In 1945 it was a secluded, genteel, unlicensed place, largely occupied by permanent residents (a pre-war brochure claimed it was run "by genteel people for genteel people"), all of whom would be summoned to meals by a resounding gong. But Beale soon saw its possibilities and developed it to its present

four-star eminence as the flagship of the Beale hotel group.

He himself lived at the hotel for more than half a century — taking particular pride in the arboretum which he established in its grounds. He liked nothing better than to conduct friends, guests or visiting groups round the multiplying variety of trees with unpronounceable names over which he never faltered even when well into his nineties. Later, he laid out a "Parliamentary Walk" of distinctive trees planted by local political celebrities, including Michael Portillo and the former Labour Chief Whip in the House of Lords, Lord Graham of Edmonton.

But Beale was the opposite of any form of recluse. He played a full part in the affairs of the tourist industry, firmly maintaining that Britain, with its heritage of cathedrals, castles and stately homes, should easily be able to compete with other countries' more abundant sunshine. No one was

more delighted to see foreign tourism develop in the way that it has — and he took particular pleasure that his appointment as CBE in 1966 should specifically have cited his "services to tourism".

Outside his own industry he found other opportunities for public service. Volunteering for the Army at the outbreak of war, he was instead appointed as controller of supplies and emergency feeding for North London. He took his place on his local bench in 1950 and served as a JP for more than 25 years. Appointed a general commissioner for taxation, he also acted as a consultant to the House of Commons Catering Committee. He remained, too, for 70 years a devoted member of the Bakers' Livery Company, becoming Master and then Senior Past Master. He married in 1932 Betty McLaughlin, a schoolteacher. She died in 1986 and he is survived by their son, Trevor, who followed him as chairman of the family business.

MILESTONES

Tiny Rowland, businessman, died of cancer on July 24 aged 80. He was born on November 27, 1917.

Beginning in the 1960s, Tiny Rowland made Lorndo into one of the most powerful companies in Africa, before almost destroying it in a bizarre series of feuds and vendettas. The second son of a German trader, he was sent to school in England and was subsequently drafted into the Army. But with his brother serving in the Wehrmacht, he refused a commission, and after a short prison sentence did civilian work instead. After the war he dealt in items in short supply, from lipstick to bridges, but had to emigrate in 1948, falling out with the Inland Revenue. In Rhodesia he farmed and bought mining interests, and became involved with the then insignificant Lorndo. His company became the biggest food producer in Africa, and he made direct personal contact with the leaders of many states. His reputation for free-wheeling dealings did not help him when — longing



William McChesney Martin

to own Harrods — he tried to bid for House of Fraser. The regulatory authorities preferred Mohamed Al Fayed, which enraged Rowland, and as owner of *The Observer* he began a prolonged and mutually ruinous propaganda battle against the Egyptian. He eventually lost control of Lorndo, *The Observer* was sold, and Rowland had to console himself with £650 million. *Obituary published on July 27.*



Zbigniew Herbert, Polish poet, died on July 26 aged 73. He was born on October 29, 1924.

Officially declared an enemy of the people by Poland's Stalinist regime in the 1950s, Zbigniew Herbert became a beacon of civilised protest to his countrymen — with the publication in English of his *Selected Poems* (1968) — to an audience in the West. Reflecting on the horrors and betrayals of his years in the wartime Resistance, as well as his treatment by the Communists, his poetry is ironic without being cynical, and considers the obstacles to virtue. He was a staunch supporter of *Solidarity*. *Obituary published on July 27.*

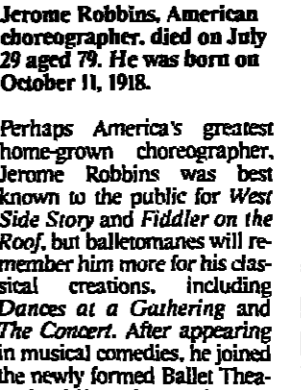
Jerome Robbins, American choreographer, died on July 29 aged 79. He was born on October 11, 1918.

Perhaps America's greatest home-grown choreographer, Jerome Robbins was best known to the public for *West Side Story* and *Fiddler on the Roof*, but balletomanes will remember him more for his classical creations, including *Dances at a Gathering* and *The Concert*. After appearing in musical comedies, he joined the newly formed Ballet Theatre in 1940, and danced an exceptional Petrushka. Fame followed with his first ballet, *Fanny Brice*, with Leonard Bernstein, which has become a repertory staple and led to the musical *On the Town*. Other Broadway forays followed, but in 1940 Robbins helped to found the New York City Bal-

let, where his awareness of popular dance forms and his sense of demotic movement helped him to produce dances of great clarity, economy and originality. In 1957 he and Bernstein triumphed on Broadway with *West Side Story*. Robbins returned to New York City Ballet in 1969, choreographing music by Chopin and Bach. *Obituary published on July 31.*

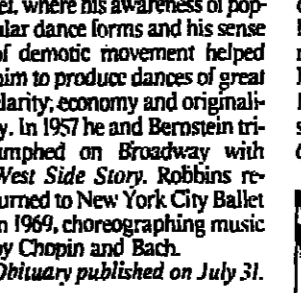
Trevor Philpott, journalist, died on July 29 aged 74. He was born on May 30, 1924.

Having written his way to a reputation on *Picture Post* and *The Sunday Times*, Trevor Philpott became one of the BBC's most respected documentary-makers. He wrote, filmed and edited more than



Sir David Hunt, diplomat and Mastermind, died on July 30 aged 84. He was born on September 25, 1913.

Having been an Oxford don at Maurice Bowra's Wadhams before the war, David Hunt worked in Intelligence under General Alexander in North Africa and in Italy. After the war, while working in the Diplomatic Service, he became a remarkably well-informed historian of the various campaigns. As a private secretary in the Prime Minister's office he served both Attlee and Churchill before becoming High Commissioner in Uganda and then in Nigeria, where he backed the federal Government in the Biafran War. Later he became "Mastermind of Masterminds" on the television brainbox contest. *Obituary published on July 31.*



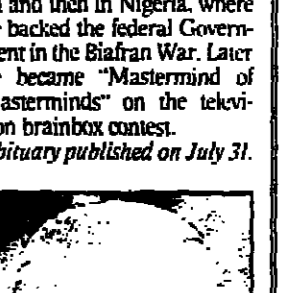
Maurice Bowra's Wadhams

Before the war, David Hunt worked in Intelligence under General Alexander in North Africa and in Italy. After the war, while working in the Diplomatic Service, he became a remarkably well-informed historian of the various campaigns. As a private secretary in the Prime Minister's office he served both Attlee and Churchill before becoming High Commissioner in Uganda and then in Nigeria, where he backed the federal Government in the Biafran War. Later he became "Mastermind of Masterminds" on the television brainbox contest. *Obituary published on July 31.*



Maurice Bowra's Wadhams

Before the war, David Hunt worked in Intelligence under General Alexander in North Africa and in Italy. After the war, while working in the Diplomatic Service, he became a remarkably well-informed historian of the various campaigns. As a private secretary in the Prime Minister's office he served both Attlee and Churchill before becoming High Commissioner in Uganda and then in Nigeria, where he backed the federal Government in the Biafran War. Later he became "Mastermind of Masterminds" on the television brainbox contest. *Obituary published on July 31.*



Trevor Philpott, journalist, died on July 29 aged 74. He was born on May 30, 1924.

Having written his way to a reputation on *Picture Post* and *The Sunday Times*, Trevor Philpott became one of the BBC's most respected documentary-makers. He wrote, filmed and edited more than

صحة من الإجمالي

Shares end week on flat note

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Company Name	Price	%
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES		
Heineken	42.50	0.00
... (rest of table)
BANKS		
Barclays	120.00	0.00
... (rest of table)
BREWERIES, PUBS & REST		
... (rest of table)
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS		
... (rest of table)
ELECTRICITY		
... (rest of table)
BUILDING MATERIALS		
... (rest of table)
ELECTRONIC & ELECT		
... (rest of table)
CHEMICALS		
... (rest of table)
CONSTRUCTION		
... (rest of table)
DISTRIBUTORS		
... (rest of table)

Company Name	Price	%
ENGINEERING, VEHICLES		
... (rest of table)
INVESTMENT TRUSTS		
... (rest of table)
MEDIA		
... (rest of table)

Company Name	Price	%
OTHER FINANCIAL		
... (rest of table)
PHARMACEUTICALS		
... (rest of table)
SUPPORT SERVICES		
... (rest of table)
PRINTING & PAPER		
... (rest of table)
PROPERTY		
... (rest of table)
TELECOMMUNICATIONS		
... (rest of table)
TRANSPORT		
... (rest of table)
WATER		
... (rest of table)
RETAILERS, FOOD		
... (rest of table)
RETAILERS, GENERAL		
... (rest of table)
ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET		
... (rest of table)

Sales of goods and services on the Internet are booming

- Are Yours?

COMPAQ Planet Microsoft

Visit our Advanced Technology Demonstration Centres in Bishopgate, London & Central Leeds

Freephone: 0500 550 650

E-mail: info@thaplanet.net www.thaplanet.net

Internet Solutions for Business from the UK's Largest Independent Service Provider

Company Name	Price	%
HOUSEHOLD GOODS & TEXT		
... (rest of table)
INSURANCE		
... (rest of table)

Company Name	Price	%
MINING		
... (rest of table)
OIL & GAS		
... (rest of table)

Company Name	Price	%
LEISURE & HOTELS		
... (rest of table)

Company Name	Price	%
SHORTS (under 5 years)		
... (rest of table)
LONGS (over 15 years)		
... (rest of table)
INDEX-LINKED (on preferred relation of)		
... (rest of table)

Astra provision
 Siemens &
 of staging
 Meeting
 over the

هذلا بن ريصل

23



HOT SEAT 26

Time for Teare to bring Rank improvements

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

BUSINESS

WEEKEND MONEY

SECTION 2

SATURDAY AUGUST 1 1998

Extra provision wipes £3.5bn off Lloyds TSB

By RICHARD MILES
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

MORE THAN £3.5 billion was wiped off the market value of Lloyds TSB yesterday after the bank unveiled a higher-than-expected provision for personal pensions mis-selling and gave warning of harder times ahead.

Lloyds TSB said it was setting aside a further £400 million against an estimated 165,000 cases of pensions mis-selling, taking the total compensation bill for its part in the scandal to £700 million.

Sir Brian Pitman, chairman, also disappointed the markets by indicating that any big acquisition by the bank was probably 18 months away. In addition, he disclosed that, although Lloyds is sitting on surplus capital, estimated at £2 billion, it has no intention at present of returning any of the cash to shareholders.

The pension mis-selling provision, the pressed first-half pre-tax profits, which fell 11 per cent to £1.28 billion. However, underlying profits before tax, exceptional provisions rose 18 per cent to £1.57

billion. Operating expenses fell 6 per cent. Peter Ellwood, group chief executive, said the bank had seen no real deterioration in the quality of its loanbook, with the minor exception of the finance house. There was a small increase in mortgage arrears, although nothing significant, and no changes in repossessions.

However, Mr Ellwood said the prospects for growth were unlikely to be as good next year and into the new millennium, as the economy slows down. "Banks are going to have a more difficult time. We will see

higher bad debts," he said, adding that he expected provisions as a percentage of average lending to rise from 0.63 per cent to 1 per cent.

Profits from retail banking rose 11 per cent to £326 million, reflecting increases in both lendings and savings, as well as reduction in staff numbers. The headcount fell by just over 2,000 during the six months, about 3 per cent of the workforce, as the bank continued to integrate Lloyds and TSB branches. The parliamentary Bill to ratify the 1995 merger has now passed through Parliament.

Mortgage business - now sold exclusively under the Cheltenham & Gloucester brand - fared well, with profits rising 21 per cent to £345 million.

The bank's estimated share of net new lending was 13.2 per cent, compared with an outstanding stock of 9.7 per cent. Two thirds of sales were fixed-rate mortgages, which now account for 30 per cent of the loanbook.

The shares closed 73p down at 828p.

Tempus page 27

Siemens gloomy on chances of staging Tyneside rescue

By CARL MORTISHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

SIEMENS, the German electrical company, sees little chance of rescuing more than 2,000 jobs on North Tyneside after its decision to close its loss-making semiconductor plant just 15 months after it was opened by the Queen.

The British Government yesterday set up a joint task force with Siemens to attempt to bail out the microchip plant, which directly employs 1,100 people and has been hit by a catastrophic collapse in the price of computer memory chips.

The shutdown will cost Siemens £30 million, including a £50 million government

grant which may have to be repaid. A further 1,000 local jobs may be lost among contractors and suppliers.

Siemens said that the plant would close in September if a buyer or partner could not be found. However, Siemens has already contacted the main industry players and yesterday admitted that "the chances are low" for a rescue.

The closure will be a blow for Peter Mandelson, who is a local MP and was appointed Secretary of State for Trade & Industry on Wednesday. He said: "It is vital that we do everything we can to protect the investment that has been made in this plant."

The plant is actually in the constituency of Stephen Byers, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and local MPs include Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, and Nick Brown, Minister of Agriculture.

Ulrich Schumacher, president of Siemens's Semiconductor Group, said that market conditions had left the company with no alternative. The plant was running a £150 million annual deficit and a deal with a prospective Taiwanese partner had recently fallen through. "This is one of the most difficult decisions we have had to take," he said.

John Redwood, Shadow Trade & Industry Secretary, blasted government policy for "damaging exporters, manufacturing confidence and jobs". However, Dr Schumacher denied that the strength of sterling had caused the closure and said that Siemens is still committed to the UK. Instead, he blamed the DMF's bailout of Korea, which worsened overcapacity in microchips and created

unfair competition. He said the price of memory chips had fallen 95 per cent from \$60 in 1995 to \$1.50 today.

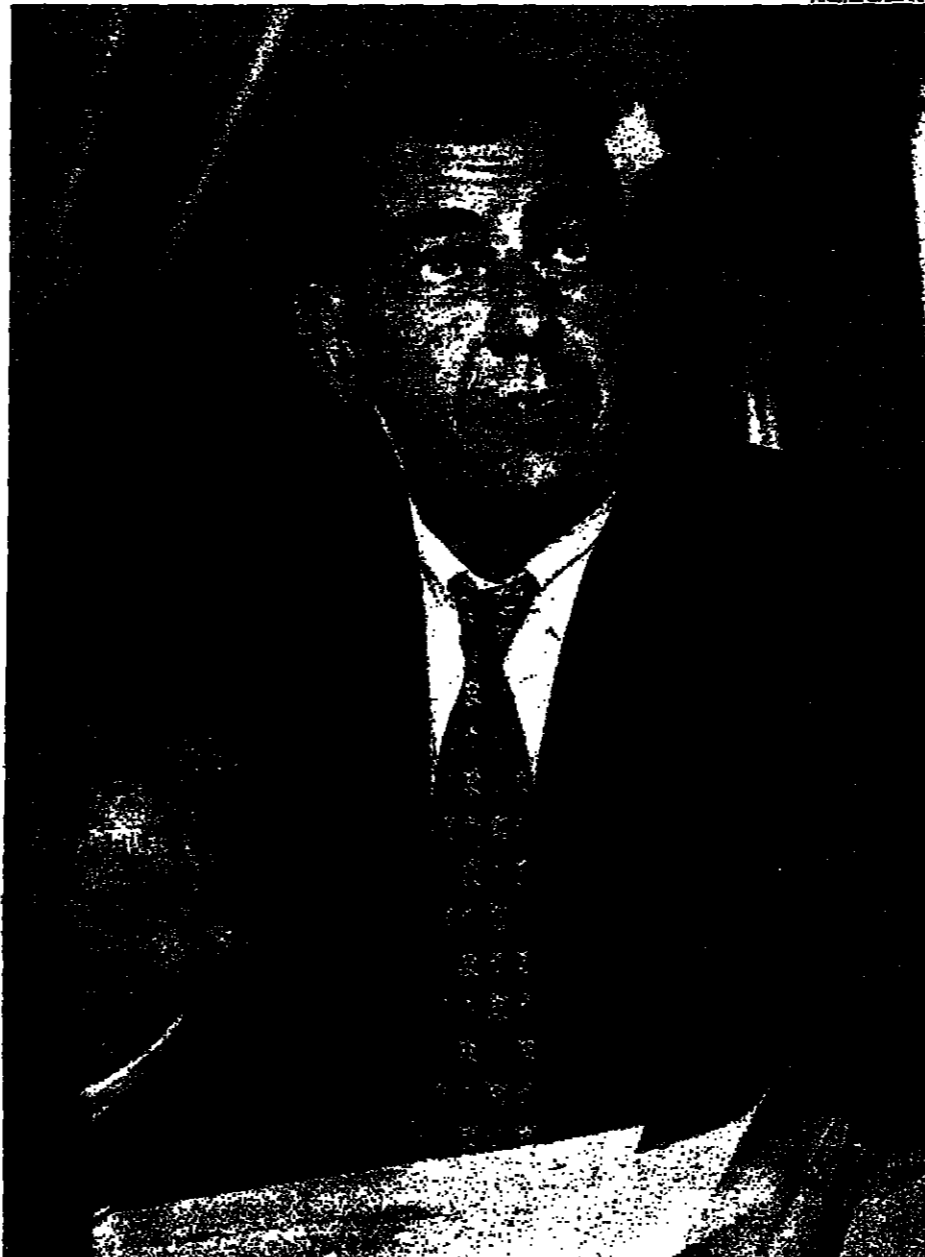
The closure decision came as a surprise to Alan Wood, head of Siemens UK. The previous week he had told the press that he believed that the Tyneside plant would survive. Mr Wood said: "It was a bit of a bombshell."

Siemens forecast last month that it faced a DMI billion loss in semiconductor and announced that capacity would be cut. The company has plants in Germany, the US, Taiwan, France and the UK. Dr Schumacher said that Britain had not been singled out, pointing to recent job cuts in Munich. Siemens's flagship semiconductor operation in Dresden has so far escaped the cutbacks.

Dr Schumacher said that the Tyneside plant was unable to continue because of high fixed costs. The plant was planned in two phases, but the second phase was scrapped as the chip market failed to live up to expectations. "It has all the costs of a plant manufacturing two to three times the amount it is making today."

The closure will be a blow to local people on Tyneside; many of the plant's workers were previously made redundant at the Swan Hunter shipyards. The Siemens chip plant uses some 250 local suppliers and pumped about £70 million annually into the local economy. Ken Jackson, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, said: "Siemens has delivered a major blow to the North East."

Commentary, page 25



Ulrich Schumacher said that market conditions had left Siemens with no alternative

Beatties' former chief arrested

By JASON NISSE

THE FORMER managing director of Beatties, the toy chain famous for its model trains, has been arrested as part of an investigation into the alleged misappropriation of the funds of Beatties' parent company, Era Group.

David Henley, 57, has been released on police bail and told to return to Hemel Hempstead police station on September 3. He was dismissed from the board of Era in December after an investigation by Archie Coulson, the company doctor brought in to save Era from a financial crisis.

Since Mr Coulson was brought in, the company has sold its Techno chain of camera shops to an investment team led by Julian Richer, Luke Johnson and Charles Dunstone, the finances of Era have been shored up and a new chief executive, David Wood, brought in.

Yesterday Mr Coulson resigned from the board of Era at its annual shareholders' meeting in London. The group is now focusing on developing Beatties, which it said was trading well despite difficult times on the high street. After the meeting Era confirmed that it had passed a file to Hertfordshire fraud squad concerning payment made from the group to a consultancy company owned by Mr Henley and his family.

"Mr Henley was the subject of an internal investigation and we understand he has now been arrested," said an Era spokesman. "We continue to assist the police with any inquiries."

Hertfordshire police told The Times that the investigation led to an arrest of a 57-year-old man, who has been bailed, but that no charges had yet been made. Mr Henley was uncontactable at his home in Milton Keynes yesterday.

Biotech directors granted 5p shares

By PAUL DURMAN

TWO OF the British Biotech directors, who have presided over a collapse in the drug development company's shares were yesterday awarded rights to more than 80,000 shares at a fraction of the market price.

Malcolm Fallen, the finance director who joined last September, will receive 47,525 deferred ordinary shares with an exercise price of 5p - against yesterday's closing price of 34p. Peder Jensen, the development director and chief medical officer appointed in January, was awarded 35,644 of the deferred shares.

Although the shares cannot be exercised for another two years, Mr Fallen's award is notionally worth £14,000 already while Dr Jensen's entitlement is worth £10,500.

British Biotech's shares traded at 177p on the day Mr Fallen joined.

Separately, Robert Mansfield, the chief executive of Vanguard Medica who yesterday became chairman of the Bio-Industry Association, denied that he was in line to replace Keith McCullagh as British Biotech's chief executive. He said he would be staying at Vanguard, which is seeking a marketing deal for a migraine drug, Pam Kirby. British Biotech's commercial director, is considered the favourite for the job.

Commentary, page 25

Meeting fuels speculation over the future for Ionica

By CHRIS AYRES

IONICA, the wireless telephone company whose disastrous flotation on the Stock Exchange last summer shocked the City, became engulfed in speculation yesterday as its directors were locked in an all-day board meeting to decide its future.

Sources close to Ionica yesterday told The Times that the company was close to being broken up, and that Patrick Mitchell, one of its founding directors alongside Nigel Playford, had asked members of staff to move with him to a new venture.

The company yesterday

said: "We can neither confirm nor deny that."

It is understood that Ionica has still failed to find long-term funding from a strategic investor, after jelling shareholders in May that it had been unable to secure a £200 million borrowing facility from its financial backers, which included Banque Paribas, Warburg Dillon Read and Société Générale. The scramble for cash is becoming ever more desperate, with recent estimates suggesting that the troubled company needs £850 million to carry out its business plan.

The company, which raised £147 million through its flotation, has seen its stock market value collapse from more than £710 million to just £66 million in less than 12 months.

Many have questioned why Warburg, the investment bank that advised Ionica, let the flotation go ahead. Arthur Andersen, the company's accountants, have also been heavily criticised for their role in the flotation. Some are calling for an official investigation into the whole affair.

Most of Ionica's shareholders - which include Yorkshire Electricity, Doughty Hanson,

Morgan Stanley and Bank of America - agreed not to sell their stakes for up to year after the company's flotation, and have therefore suffered disastrous losses. The company's plan was to use high-tech wireless equipment to offer consumers a low-cost alternative to British Telecom.

About 200 shareholders, including Lord Blyth of Rowington, the Boes chairman, made an initial profit of more than £10 million in total after the flotation. Shareholders were given a total of 3.7 million share options at 150p each in return for supporting its early fundraising.

A WEEK IN THE CITY

Tiny Rowland is dead. Lamented or not, the passing of one of the great City personalities was bound to loom large, even in a week that mixed a Cabinet reshuffle and mergers in a heady brew. Peter Mandelson replaced Margaret Beckett at the Department of Trade and Industry, and the Rolls-Royce saga took an unexpected turn.

So, exit Tiny. Outspoken to the end, he died on Saturday at the age of 80. Another maverick is gone, after the deaths of Robert Maxwell, Geisv. Botnar and Sir James Goldsmith. What will now become of Rowland's yacht, Hansel, and the Gulfstream jet in which he was given to dropping in on African potlucks? Then there is the mat-

ter of the large plastic shark (nicknamed "Tiny") that hung for a time in the Harrods food hall, and latterly took up residence at leafy Bourne End, near Marlow.

When Dieter Bock arrived at Loughborough in 1993, Rowland was quick to hail him as "my corporate son", saying that they would work together "happily, smoothly and indivisibly". They were dubbed "the indivisibles". Towards the end, Rowland was more fond of observations such as "Mr Bock doesn't own a single asset in his own name, except his bicycle - and except his wife." Oooh.

It was a week of excitement at the FTI, which saw Mandelson slip into the top slot, dropping the pompous Pres-

ident of the Board of Trade title in favour of plain Secretary of State. Nigel "Shame 'em" Griffiths was sacked as Consumer Affairs Minister in favour of Kim Howells, while Lord Sainsbury of Turville, retiring chairman of the supermarket chain and one of Labour's generous donors, becomes junior Trade and Industry Minister. Someone to keep Lord Simon of Highbury company.

Volkswagen, which outbid BMW to buy Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, averted an ungentlemanly clash by agreeing to let BMW become the sole maker of Rolls-Royces from 2003. VW retains the Bentley marque and the Crewe factory, but BMW wins the grille and silver lady

emblem. BMW had threatened to withdraw engines and parts for new Rolls-Royce and Bentley models.

Shares in British Telecom soared on word of a \$10 billion (£6 billion) joint venture with AT&T, the US telecoms company, which goes some way to making up for the failed venture with MCI. In America, Bell Atlantic and GTE Corp agreed to a \$67 billion merger that creates one of the world's biggest telephone companies.

Prospects look less buoyant in the UK commercial property market, where shares in British Land and other big players have slid steadily in recent months. Pundits fear a re-run of the late-1980s. Matters look simi-

larly adrift for individual savings accounts (Isas), which are due to replace personal equity plans next year. Supermarkets were to play a big part in making Isas accessible, but J Sainsbury and Tesco may not be willing to sell them.

There have been some momentous "Weeks in the City": Robert Maxwell's death; Asil Nadir's moonlight flit; the departures of Nigel Lawson and Norman Lamont; and the near-collapse of Lloyds of London. The future will bring fresh dramas, but the stage will be the barer for the passing of Tiny Rowland. One can hear him *sotto voce*, ranting from the wings.

JON ASHWORTH

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5937.0	(-73.7)
Yield	2.83%	
FTSE All Share	2754.72	(-26.49)
Nikkei	16378.87	(+177.37)
New York		
Dow Jones	9007.18	(-19.85)
S&P Composite	1158.48	(-4.47)

US RATE

Federal Funds	5.75%	(5.75%)
Long Bond	1.87%	(1.87%)
5 Year	5.75%	(5.75%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month interbank	7.75%	(7.75%)
3-month bill	108.04	(108.06)

STERLING

New York	1.6335	(1.6367)
London		
DM	1.6580	(1.6403)
FF	1.4907	(1.4927)
FR	164.58	(163.70)
Sfr	114.0	(113.5)

YEN DOLLAR

London	1.7790	(1.7820)
DM	5.9655	(5.9750)
FF	1.4907	(1.4927)
FR	164.58	(163.70)
Sfr	114.0	(113.5)

Tokyo close Yen 143.78

NORTH SEA OIL

Break 15-day (Oct)	\$13.50	(\$13.30)
--------------------	---------	-----------

GOLD

London close	\$288.85	(\$290.25)
--------------	----------	------------

* denotes midday trading price

Conran's restaurants worth £100m

SIR Terence Conran's restaurant empire - which includes Quaglino's, Bibendum and Le Pont de la Tour - is now worth more than £100 million, recent deals in the catering trade have indicated.

The stock market has given Beigo, which is headed by Luke Johnson, a valuation of £91 million despite having only five restaurants to Conran Holdings' 12. Sir Terence is currently looking at further expansion plans for his chain in the City, New York and Paris.

Beigo is now interested in buying The Ivy and Le Caprice and Damien Hirst's Pharmacy is thinking of floating in deals which have added to the already heady market for central London eateries.

"People who know how to run restaurants are selling out to people who know nothing about the industry," said one market analyst.

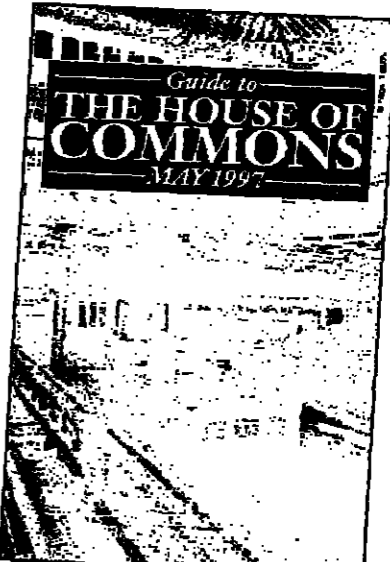
EXCLUSIVE OFFER THE TIMES

Save £5 on guide to the House of Commons

Readers can buy *The Times Guide to the House of Commons*, May 1997, for just £30, a saving of £5 on the normal selling price of £35.

The guide is edited by Times journalist Tim Austin and features contributions by Simon Jenkins, Matthew Parris and Anthony Howard. One year on from Labour's historic May 1997 landside victory, a fully revised and updated edition of the definitive, bestselling guide is a must for every bookshelf.

- THE BOOK CONTAINS:
 - a biography and photograph of every MP
 - detailed constituency-by-constituency breakdown of results
 - authoritative analysis and comment
 - the Cabinet and Shadow Cabinets in full
 - details of by-elections since May 1997
 - Fold-out colour map



The Times Guide to the House of Commons

Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms
Address
Postcode

Or debit my MasterCard/Visa card no.

Print Name _____ Exp. Date _____
Signature _____ Date _____
Send coupon and remittance to: The Times Guide to the House of Commons FT766, PO Box 546, Falmouth TR11 2YX
Allow 28 days for delivery from receipt of order.
No claims for loss in transit can be made after 60 days.
If despatched, please return the book to within seven days for a full refund. The offer is subject to availability.
Please tick box if you do not wish to receive further details from The Times or companies approved by us.

CREDIT CARD ORDERS ON 0990 134 459
CHANGING TIMES

صحة من لإمداد

Ruling gives Lloyd's leave to pursue names

By Jon Ashworth

LOYD'S NAMES, including the former High Sheriff of Somerset, face imminent bankruptcy after the Court of Appeal removed the final legal barrier blocking the insurer from pursuing debts of £150 million.

has been refused, allowing Lloyd's to press ahead with recoveries from names who declined to participate in the settlement. Costs and interest have dramatically swollen the amounts owed to Lloyd's, with one name who owed £50,000 now facing a bill for £400,000.

with costs awarded to Lloyd's. Mr Thomas-Everard lost more than £12 million at Lloyd's, and now risks forfeiting his Somerset estate.

Appeal has capped all further action. This is the end of the long road of litigation for those names who have not paid their debts.

names could have settled for significantly lower sums.

Japan faces more strife as jobless figures soar

From Robert Whyman in Tokyo and Alasdair Murray

JAPAN admitted yesterday that its new Government faces "an unprecedented crisis" as fresh data showed the jobless rate climbing to a record high in June, while the yen sank further in the foreign exchange markets.

Fears that Japan's continuing problems are on the verge of forcing the US economy into recession, however, proved unfounded with the publication of US GDP data showing unexpectedly strong growth.

US GDP grew at an annual rate of 1.4 per cent, down from 5.5 per cent in the first quarter, but well ahead of market expectations of zero growth. Economists said the underlying growth rate is probably higher because the General Motors strike is estimated to have cut a full percentage point off the figures.

In Tokyo, an apparent gaffe by Kiichi Miyazawa, the newly appointed Finance Minister, sent the yen below 144 to the dollar for the first time since joint Japanese-American intervention in the currency markets two months ago.

Overnight, Mr Miyazawa had hinted that there would be no more intervention to prop up the yen. However, under apparent pressure from China and the US, Mr Miyazawa hurriedly issued a statement

intended to "clarify" his remark, claiming that Japan would intervene in currency markets "if necessary".

The dollar dipped briefly, but the impact of Mr Miyazawa's correction was short-lived. In late Tokyo trade, the dollar was quoted at 143.77-80, and later broke through the 144-yen line in European trading.

Japan's jobless rate rose to a record high of 4.3 per cent in June. Official data also showed there were only 51 job offers for every 100 people looking for work, the lowest level since January 1978.

Job losses, and worries about job security, are expected to put further downward pressure on consumer spending, leading to further reduction in output.

Economists predict the unemployment rate could reach 5 per cent by the end of the year. "The jobs situation is not going to improve until final demand does, but even if final demand gets better, firms will continue with restructuring," said Mamoru Yamazaki, senior economist with Paribas Capital Markets.

More top-flight Japanese firms are shedding surplus staff, a process analysts say is overdue, and essential for boosting corporate profits and generating growth.

Commentary page 25



Mike Darrington, left, managing director of Greggs, and Malcolm Simpson, finance director, are opening more shops

Baker Greggs sees profit rise

GREGGS, the rapidly growing bakery group, lifted first-half profits 15 per cent, to £6.1 million. Its shares rose 25p, to £25.87½ (Times Day writes).

Sales of bakery-related takeaway food rose 6.4 per cent. Baker's Oven sales increased only 2.8 per cent. The shop opening programme continued, with a net increase of nine shops, to 1,066. Fifteen will be opened during the remainder of the year.

The company is in the middle of a two-year investment programme to improve service and cut costs.

The interim dividend rises 14 per cent to 12.5p.

Computer managers asked to take a 5% cut in pay

From Andrew Butcher in New York

ASIA'S economic crisis and lower profit margins have forced a string of retrenchments and executive pay cuts on US computer equipment companies.

Hewlett-Packard, the Silicon Valley pioneer, has cut pay for 2,400 managers by 5 per cent in an effort to curb costs after a spate of bad earnings results.

The three-month pay cut will start late this year and will affect the

company's British managers, Hewlett-Packard said.

The company, which manufactures computers, printers and other electronic equipment, has already asked some sections to take voluntary pay cuts. It will also close offices around the world for four days over Christmas.

Another Californian technology company, National Semiconductor, joined Hewlett-Packard in tightening

its corporate belt. The computer chip-maker will force 13,000 workers to take a two-week unpaid break.

In April, National Semiconductor announced it would prune its workforce by 1,400, equal to 10 per cent of its employees.

A smaller semiconductor company, Novellus Systems, said on Thursday it would extend job cuts to a total of 20 per cent of its workforce.

Robinson unveils tax rules for Isas

THE tax rules on the individual savings account (Isa), the tax-free replacement for personal equity plans (Peps) and tax-exempt special savings accounts (Tessas) were published yesterday. However, Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, in announcing the rules indicated that consultation was not yet over on the Isa, which has been dogged by controversy since its launch at the end of last year. He said: "Although these regulations mark the end of the first stage of the Isa story, our approach of listening to what people have to say is certainly not over."

Isas will be available from April 1999. Savers will be able to subscribe up to £5,000 in each tax year over a ten-year period. The money can be put in a mixture of life insurance, stocks and shares and cash. Further rules on government plans for performance benchmarks for the product are yet to be published. The proposals on the benchmark, the so-called CAT standard, will eventually determine cost and terms of Isas. These rules are not expected until September. Some in the financial services industry believe that the late publication of the plans for the Catmark will not give companies enough time to design products for next year.

Naafi seals contract

NAAFI, the armed forces' preferred trading organisation, has won the largest contract ever to be awarded by the Ministry of Defence for catering and services support. The contract, awarded to Naafi in alliance with Eures Support Services, covers 25,000 military personnel in Germany and brings a potential of £500 million in sales over seven years. Competitive tendering began in 1994 and attracted 280 bidders. Eures is the largest food services provider to the Ministry of Defence with more than 3,000 employees.

Lomond in £23m merger

LOMOND UNDERWRITING, the Lloyd's investment group, has agreed to a £23.3 million merger with Atrium Cockell in a deal that will see the issue of new Lomond shares at 191p. Lomond shares were yesterday suspended at an unchanged 194½p. The deal has to be approved by shareholders at a special meeting after which it is intended to re-list the shares as a trading company. Atrium Cockell manages two syndicates at Lloyd's. Lomond was formed in 1993 as a Lloyd's investment vehicle.

Sainsbury options sold

LORD SAINSBURY OF TURVILLE, who resigned as chairman of J Sainsbury on Thursday after his appointment as a junior minister at the Department of Trade and Industry, has made £423,000 profit from the exercise of share options in the supermarket group. He took up options over 222,564 shares at 330p and sold them at 520p. His remaining beneficial interest in the company — 13.24 per cent of its shares valued at more than £1.3 billion — has been transferred into a blind trust with the rest of his investments.

Pearson takeover review

A REVIEW of Pearson's takeover of Simon & Schuster's educational and professional publishing business by the United States Justice Department has been extended. The second phase of the review is expected to concentrate on the diversity of textbooks available for American schoolchildren. Review extensions are comparatively rare, although in the handful of other recent publishing mergers, they did not prevent the mergers being approved. Pearson has said that it expected to complete the deal in the second half of 1998.

Staveley in peace pact

STAVELEY, the industrial group, has reached a peace deal with GPC, its 13 per cent shareholder that had called for a demerger of the profitable salt division and had tabled resolutions at the forthcoming annual meeting. The resolutions, however, will not now be put after Staveley promised to look at ways of returning cash to shareholders as soon as possible. Staveley had said that a demerger of the salt division would not occur until the recent restructuring measures had taken effect. Staveley shares rose 2p to 107½.

Sutton sails into profit

SUTTON Harbour Holdings, the operators of Plymouth's historic harbour properties, made a maiden pre-tax profit of £728,000 in its first full year on the AIM market, a rise of 28 per cent. Earnings per share rose 33 per cent to 7.29p for the year to end March and a total dividend of 3.65p will be paid. The shares rose 2½p to 142½p. Bryan Foster, chairman, said: "Our redevelopment and regeneration programme for Sutton Harbour has led to substantial increases in land values and steadily increasing profitability."

S Korean banks merge

SOUTH KOREAN banks, Hanil Bank and the Commercial Bank of Korea, announced they would merge to create the country's largest bank, ushering in a new era of consolidation in the ailing sector. The merger will lead to the emergence of a superbank with combined assets of 102 trillion won (£50 billion). It is seen as a likely catalyst for a series of tie-ups among South Korean banks, under pressure from the Government to put their houses in order as the country battles to emerge from the severe financial crisis.

Delyn records losses

DELYN, the AIM listed property company, clocked up a loss of £246,000 in the 14 months to end March against a £284,000 profit in the preceding year. Losses per share were 0.99p against previous earnings of 2.22p. Guy Naggar, the chairman, said the company now has substantial cash resources and net assets and is trading profitably. He said that since April 1998, the company has looked at more than 15 potential acquisitions. The final dividend is maintained at 1.5p a share making a 2p total for the year.

Hull gets a call for BT to dial in

By Chris Avyres

COMPANIES and residents of Kingston-upon-Hull could soon be able to buy services from British Telecom for the first time since the city became connected to a telephone network in 1902.

Hull, the city in which the poet Philip Larkin chose to live because it was difficult to get to, is the only area of Britain still to have a council-owned telecoms company, Kingston Communications. The company, which is considering a £400 million flotation to raise money, enjoys a monopoly. David Edmonds, director general of Ofcom, the telecoms watchdog, said the results of a review would allow BT to enter the Hull market, but that appropriate safeguards would be applied to prevent anti-competitive behaviour from the privatised company. Kingston welcomed Ofcom's statement, but BT was less than enthusiastic. A spokeswoman said the company had no firm plans for Hull. Kingston recently became embroiled in a bizarre "fishgate" scandal, when an American entrepreneur offered council leaders a fish supper. He wanted to discuss a £45 million bid for a 49 per cent stake in Kingston.

Needleman gets £6.45m from sale

By Chris Avyres

JOHN NEEDLEMAN, age 45, the entrepreneur behind Ramboro Books, which distributes a range of titles, is set to pocket £6.45 million from the sale of the company to Chrysalis, the media group headed by Chris Wright.

Chrysalis yesterday agreed to pay £1.65 million in loan stock to Mr Needleman for a 75 per cent stake in Firecount, Ramboro's parent company. The media company said it could buy the remaining 25 per cent stake after 2001 for up to £4.8 million, depending on Ramboro's performance.

Ramboro will be merged into Chrysalis's Lasgo Export Division, the wholesaler of records, CDs, videos and other merchandise to over 50 countries around the world. Chrysalis said: "Ramboro represents a good strategic fit, with its complementary interests in the book industry and strong export record providing an excellent opportunity to expand the division."

It added that cash would be made available to Ramboro to buy smaller established book publishing companies. Shares in the company rose 2½p to 810p. Yesterday's deal follows a string of small acquisitions by Chrysalis.

Cendant chief's 'blind rage'

From Andrew Butcher in New York

HENRY SILVERMAN, chairman of the troubled Cendant services group, has been seen by a psychiatrist to help him deal with the "blind rage" he feels about accounting irregularities surrounding his company.

Mr Silverman said he was studying the possibility of selling several of Cendant's publishing and software businesses, but did not mention auctioning British assets such as National Car Parking and the RAC motoring division. The sales could raise \$2 billion (£1.22 billion).

THE SUNDAY TIMES

At 8am six battle-weary men entered the exclusive 19th hole at Nueburg in Germany to hammer out a deal under which Rolls-Royce and Bentley, two of the world's great marques, would go their separate ways after a 67-year corporate marriage...

Business Focus, The Sunday Times Tomorrow

Bank	Bank	Bank
Australia \$	2.78	2.80
Austria Sch	13.48	13.50
Belgium Fr	55.13	55.17
Canada \$	2.28	2.30
Denmark Dkr	0.09	0.09
Germany M	11.87	10.78
Greece Dr	3.50	6.19
Hong Kong \$	7.75	8.84
Ireland Pt	0.78	0.78
Italy Lire	10.22	8.44
Japan Yen	167	168
Netherlands Gld	2.21	1.12
New Zealand \$	1.22	1.22
Norway Kr	3.46	3.46
Portugal Esc	200	470
Spain Ptas	164	168
Switzerland Fr	1.71	1.71
USA	4699	4900
UK	1.00	1.00

Refer to annual denotation handbook only as supplied by Barclay Bank. Refer to annual denotation handbook for details of exchange rates and trading yesterday.

AN EXCLUSIVE OFFER THE TIMES

CD-ROMS FROM ONLY £5.95

Saving up to £35 on rrp

THE TIMES/BVG ORDER FORM FOR CD-ROM OFFER

FREE POSTAGE AND PACKING ON ALL ORDERS

Complete coupon and send with credit card details or cheque/postal orders made payable to: *The Times FT712*

My/Mrs/Ms/Ms/Other _____ Initials _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Day tel _____

City Code _____ RRP YOU PAY _____

Reference _____

A069	Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia 97	£29.99	£5.95
A070	Infoplease UK	£29.99	£5.95
R8	Compton's Interactive World Atlas	£29.99	£14.95
A071	Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia 98	£29.99	£14.95
A072	Oxford Encyclopedia	£39.99	£19.95

Language

A051	Let's Learn French for Children (7 to adult)	£14.44	£5.95
A055	Berlitz Think & Talk French	£29.99	£14.99
A056	Berlitz Think & Talk German	£29.99	£14.99
A057	Berlitz Think & Talk Italian	£29.99	£14.99
A058	Berlitz Think & Talk Spanish	£29.99	£14.99

PC Games

A030	Zed 2	£9.99	£9.99
A031	Actan Soccer	£28.99	£7.99
A032	Fatal Racing	£14.99	£7.99
A034	Realms of the Haunting	£44.99	£14.99
A035	Phantom's Revenge	£24.99	£14.99
A036	Hardware 4 x 4	£34.99	£14.99
A037	Premier Manager 97	£34.99	£14.99

Multiplatform

EDF	Treasure Island	£9.99	£5.95
A1	Simple Fractions (ages 2 to 6)	£9.99	£5.95
AS	My First Word Book	£9.99	£5.95
D1	GCSE Maths	£9.99	£5.95

Productivity

P5	Keyboard Master Crash Course	£9.99	£5.95
P1	Touch Type	£19.99	£5.95
P6	Getting Started with Microsoft 97 (5-CD pack)	£99.99	£24.95

Total value of order £: _____

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT Card no: _____

Expiry date: _____ / _____

Mastercard Visa

Name on card: _____

Supply address of registered cardholder on a separate sheet of paper if different from that above

Signature: _____

Offer prices applicable for the UK and Northern Ireland only. For postage quotes on overseas orders please telephone 01874 611833 ext 251. If dissatisfied with goods return within seven days for a full refund. Offer subject to availability.

If you would prefer not to receive information and offers from organisations carefully selected by *The Times*, please tick

CREDIT CARD ORDERS/INQUIRIES TEL: 01874 611 633 EXT.251 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

CHANGING TIMES

Peacoach riv
teen light for

enice buys to

S

weary

with wings

Mandelson's first dilemma



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Inward investment has started going wrong. And it has started just in time to present Peter Mandelson with an intractable problem. How can he persuade Gordon Brown to change economic policy without appearing pushy or divisive?

The Siemens factory is not closing, nor is the Hyundai plant idle because foreigners do not care about British jobs. But many people will think that Mr Mandelson will not be able to convince them otherwise. One reason is that he dare not tell them the truth.

These plants came to Britain to take advantage of generous support from taxpayers for factories on Tyneside or in most of Scotland and Wales. Otherwise, they would not grace our great industrial cities, which need them to fill the gap left by smokestack industries. They are marginal projects, just like all those branch plants that British companies were lured into building in the North and Scotland, and which were closed in droves during the industrial recession of 1980-82, if not before.

Marginal manufacturing projects, or those that are more risky than average, tend to have one thing in common — they depend on a competitive exchange rate. Sterling's headlong rise was the great industrial reaper in 1980. It jumped 12 per cent against the mark after Mr Brown ditched fiscal policy and contracted interest rates to the

Bank of England with orders to be strict.

For Siemens, uncompetitive sterling was the *coup de grace*. High-tech plants built on the graveyards of heavy industry were ideally placed to be smashed by the Asian crash. The collapse of Far East demand, the ruination of "tiger" economies and the suicidal Western assault on their exchange rates have poisoned the *The Tyne's* hopes. The speculators who oversold the won and the rupiah destroyed these British jobs.

If we were the French, we should resort to EU protectionism without a qualm. Thankfully, we are not, unless Mr Mandelson has a new populist ace up his sleeve.

There is just a speck of hope that ministers will learn some lessons. After Scotland, the North East is the happiest hunting ground of new Labour grandees: Tony Blair, Mr Mandelson, enforcer Cuningham and Cabinet newcomers Nick Brown and Stephen Byers. First Secretary at the Treasury. They can now see the results of ignoring the exchange rate and leaving manufacturing to rot on the basis of dodgy statistics.

There is no point in Mr

Mandelson or Mr Brown waffling on condescendingly about productivity. The Siemens plant was great. If it had been an overstaffed inefficient financial services operation instead, it would still have a future.

The Chancellor must be told, even if that embarrasses the euro project that he and Mr Mandelson share. Otherwise the new man to care about industry will find himself wringing his hands until they are raw.

A tough cure for Japan's addiction

A good addiction therapies can only really start when the patient finally admits the seriousness of the problem. So the markets really ought to have welcomed the confession yesterday by Kichi Miyazawa, the new Japanese Finance Minister, that the once mighty economy is facing "an unprecedented

crisis" and there is no immediate end in sight to the gloom.

In Japan, however, old habits die hard and the new Government seems dangerously close to descending back into the kind of bumbling incompetence and economic conservatism which is at the root of the nation's problems. Mr Miyazawa, who is 78, sent the yen into freefall again after hinting that he did not want to intervene in the market to prop up the ailing currency.

There is a tempting economic logic to this. With interest rates already rock-bottom and no clear consensus emerging on substantial tax cuts, Japan is inclined to return to its former ways and export its way out of its trouble. This is not a solution that the US or China are willing to countenance. The phone lines between Washington and Beijing and Tokyo were clearly busy yesterday, forcing Mr Miyazawa into an uncomfortable retraction just a few hours later.

The markets heard the message, however. Skepticism about the new Government's ability to deliver on reform is hardening. Keizo Obuchi, the new Prime Minister, has little experience of finance and Mr Miyazawa is compromised by his role in creating the late 1980s economic bubble. It will be at least January before tax cut promises are fulfilled and even then the market expects the stimulus boost to amount to little more than 0.2 per cent of GDP compared with the 1 to 2 per cent that is needed.

There are those in the markets who believe Japan's problems could still get much, much worse. Standard & Poor's, the international credit rating agency, published research this week that estimated that there is a one-in-four chance that Japan's economic problems will trigger not a global recession but a full-blown depression. In this scenario, the yen slumps to around 200 to the dollar and the Japanese economy

contracts by a full 8 per cent next year. Such a slump would send the US into recession and, even in relatively buoyant Europe, growth would fall to levels that would prompt a sharp rise in unemployment. Japan has the potential to continue making global economic life hell for as long as its leaders try to resist taking the full cure.

The price of optimism — 5p

British Biotech's latest news is hardly destined to inspire confidence in shell-shocked investors. It may have been necessary to ladle out sweeteners in order to encourage new directors to join biotechnology's version of Dallas, but pricing the deferred shares at 5p each appears to demonstrate either extreme desperation to land the new recruits or little optimism for the future of the stock.

The controversy surrounding the company has no chance of abating just yet. After the dramatic mud-slinging in front of the Parliamentary Select Committee last month, next month should bring the Committee's report. If it does not call for a

clean out of the ineffectual non-executives, it should. Keith McCullagh, the domineering chief executive, has already announced that he will leave in September but the identity of his replacement remains a mystery.

Investing in the brave new world is a risky business, and it is not only biotechnology that offers such excitement. Ionica promised to be the revolutionary face of telecommunications when it was listed on the stock market. That was barely a year ago and the shares, floated at 390p, even managed to stagger up to 421p before the truth emerged, that this was a company with ambition, but little else.

Both Biotech and Ionica were fine top-of-the-market tales. In today's climate, investors are going to be less prepared to take a punt and more inclined to back proven stories. Why take a risk on Biotech when there is Glaxo?

Reversing buses

IN HER final act as President of the Board of Trade, it seems Margaret Blockit has become Margaret Allowit and taken the highly irregular step of going back on a previously announced MMC ruling. She is waving aside MMC obstacles to allow FirstGroup to drive its buses on some Glasgow routes. It seems she became worried about the dominance of Stagecoach in the area, although the MMC could have seen that on the signposts.

Stagecoach rivalry ensures green light for FirstGroup

By Fraser Nelson

MARGARET BECKETT has approved FirstGroup's acquisition of Glasgow's largest bus company, overruling the decision of her predecessor and the advice of the Director-General of Fair Trading (see Commentary, this page).

In her last move as President of the Board of Trade, Mrs Beckett has ruled that FirstGroup is now suffering enough competition in Glasgow at the hands of Stagecoach, its arch-rival.

The decision comes only 18 months after her predecessor, Ian Lang, ordered FirstGroup to sell its Midland Bluebird service to win approval for its acquisition of Strathclyde Buses and Kelvin Buses.

Mr Lang's ruling was made a year before Stagecoach started running 70 buses in

Glasgow and launched a price war which is understood to be costing both companies some £8 million a year.

Mrs Beckett said that John Bridgeman, the Director-General of Fair Trading, still fears that FirstGroup's hold of the Glasgow market is too strong — even with the new competition. She said: "I do not agree... Stagecoach's entry, although on a relatively small scale, is a demonstration that competition in the relevant market is possible."

She has allowed FirstGroup to keep all three bus companies in return for promises on low fares and service levels.

The result surprised the City and drew concern that FirstGroup and Stagecoach may continue to fight it out in Glasgow, at great cost to

shareholders. One analyst said: "Stagecoach has shot itself in the foot. It went in to take away FirstGroup's market share and has ended up helping it get around the DTI. Brian Souter must be livid."

Mr Souter, chairman of Stagecoach, yesterday put out a statement welcoming Mrs Beckett's decision in the name of free competition and passenger choice.

Bob Montgomery, managing director of FirstGroup's Glasgow operation, said: "It's great to have the whole business intact. The original MMC report said it was impossible for any competitor to start up in Glasgow, and Stagecoach proved it wrong six weeks later."

However, there are fears that FirstGroup's near-monopoly on Glasgow buses may resume if Stagecoach eventually decides to concede defeat and pull out.

Shares of Stagecoach dropped 8p to 481p yesterday, while FirstGroup added 2p to £11.90.

The Glasgow bus war is an extension of their battle in Fife, next to Stagecoach's Perth homeland. Stagecoach came to Glasgow at the same time as FirstGroup decided to launch a service in Fife — where Stagecoach was dominant.

Their tactics have included recruiting conductors to welcome aboard elderly passengers, and giving free sweets on services already being run at no charge. This play was dropped after an overly enthusiastic response from local schoolchildren.

GEC chief's pay drops to £904,000

LORD SIMPSON OF Dunkeld, the managing director of GEC, received a total pay package of £904,000 last year, plus a further £183,000 in pension contributions (Adam Jones writes).

The previous year, he received £1.14 million, excluding pension, for less than seven months' work because of a £500,000 payment made to match the perks left behind at his old job.

John Mayo, the finance director, received £501,000, plus £184,000 in pension contributions. He also received 927,960 share options, exercisable at 409.5p a share.

Michael Lester, vice-chairman, received 525,030 options exercisable at 409.5p, on top of his £569,000 salary and £26,000 pension contributions.

Dunlop returns in £510m deal

By Paul Durman

BTR, which is one of the worst-performing shares in the FTSE 100, will show a £190 million profit on the £510 million sale of its aerospace businesses to Doughy Hanson, the private equity investment firm.

The new owner will rename the group of four BTR businesses the Dunlop Standard Aerospace Group, reflecting the inclusion of the Dunlop aviation division, which makes and services wheel and brake systems, and Dunlop Precision Rubber, which makes seals and mouldings. The other businesses that BTR is selling are Standard Aero, which repairs engines, and a maker of parts for turbofan engines.

The price paid, slightly more than the leaked figure, represents 2.1 times the four businesses' 1997 sales of £246 million, and 9.8 times their £25 million profit before interest

and tax. The net operating assets involved are valued at £215 million.

BTR has restructured itself to try to focus on engineering business of global scale. However, a flurry of disposals has failed to prevent the shares, which were more than 400p five years ago, sliding to 151p, up 4.5p yesterday.

Ian Strachan, BTR chief executive, said: "In September 1996 we outlined our determination to focus on engineering businesses which either already have global scale or have the potential to achieve it in a way that will enhance shareholder value. Within the rapidly consolidating aerospace industry, our businesses are attractive to leading industry players. Although profitable, they are small in terms of BTR and their sector and are not able to achieve our stated goals."

CityLink wins Tube contract

CITYLINK Telecommunications consortium, made up of Racal, Hyder, Charterhouse Bank and Motorola, has won the London Underground contract to replace and manage the radio and transmission services for the entire Tube network.

The Private Finance Initiative project is worth about £1 billion over 20 years. The award is subject to definitive terms and conditions being agreed later this year.

Consortium members will supply a new digital radio system that will also have a high-speed optical fibre link to support services. They will also take over the operation of the existing network. The installation is expected to take four years.

Lex Service buys to overtake rivals

By Timon Day

LEX SERVICE, the vehicle contract hire group, has taken pole position in the sector by purchasing the outstanding 50 per cent of Lex Vehicle Leasing from Lombard North Central, NorthWest's leasing offshoot.

The deal is a sweet one because Lex had an option to purchase Lombard's stake if it came up for sale and was thus able to buy it more cheaply. Lex is paying £83.5 million for 30 per cent and could pay about £70 million for the remaining 20 per cent, depending on the book value of the 96,000 strong car fleet over the next three years.

Leasing profits last year grew to £42 million and are expected to increase marginally this year after a £200,000 rise to £19.6 million in the first half. A sharp fall in second-hand car prices trimmed the profit advance.

Lombard is selling because it wanted 100 per cent ownership of the operation but Lex refused to sell. Instead, Lombard will concentrate on grow-



Pole position: Andy Harrison, the Lex chief executive, left, and Sir Trevor Chinn, chairman

ing its BTC offshoot that has 64,000 cars.

"Lex is considering a new joint venture that could accelerate the commercial development of the contract hire

business. Andy Harrison, chief executive, said he is confident Lex can finance it independently. Underlying gearing will be 7 per cent. First-half profits from Lex

increased 18 per cent to £36.1 million and the shares rose 20 pence to 515 pence. The dividend goes up from 6.8p to 7.8p. Earnings per share grew 18 per cent to 22.5 pence a share.

Battle weary

DO I detect a degree of disillusionment at the Financial Services Authority? Almost a year after its launch the FSA has yet to produce more than a few vague statements on strategy.

After the fashion of new Labour, I suppose, the watchdog seems content to publish reams of consultation papers but no firm rules. Even this week's draft Bill was long on what the FSA would be doing and short on putting this into effect. It takes time for legislation to reach the statute books, but one does wonder how many crooks are getting away with it in the meanwhile.

So the FSA staff are pinning for the good old days of million-pound fines, when pension mis-sellers could be given a good kicking. Some have taken to wondering aloud whether the watchdog will ever be allowed to show its teeth or whether this role has now been entirely usurped by the Treasury Select Committee.

□ HATS off to John Redwood and Peter Mandelson for their

powers of prediction. On a recent trip back from the planet Vulcan Redwood slipped through one of those unfortunate time-warps and the Shadow Trade Secretary is now working on a different timeframe from the rest of us.

Yesterday's job losses on Tyneside were not announced by Siemens until 1pm, and the company, despite the rumours, kept all information strictly under wraps until then. But Redwood's sound-bite, which explained that the redundancies were all the fault of the Government, was issued shortly after noon, almost an hour before the event.

Equally temporarily challenged is our new Trade Secretary, whose response was out 24 minutes before the event. With a politician of such foresight now in charge, I myself predict an immediate economic recovery.

Twin woes

A FORTNIGHT ago I wrote of the travails of the Barclay



twin's French language magazine, *L'Europeen*, which has been forced to switch from weekly to monthly publication because of poor sales. Now Pierre de Boisguilbert, chairman of the board of the holding company, has lodged a declaration of cessation of payment at the French Tribunal de Commerce, which deals with bankruptcies.

This tends to be the first stage in getting a business wound up. At the same time *Le Monde*, the French newspaper that owns a third of the business to the Barclays' two thirds, has announced that it is

seeking a new partner. Calls to various bits of the Barclays empire are unreturned, so I have no idea how much they have lost on the venture. But I dare say they can afford it.

Called back

A COUPLE of months ago there was a fuss about an anyone book on financial regulation that made glancing reference to one of the biggest financial scandals of recent years, the collapse of Knight Williams. The board, as I reported, took exception and reached for their solitaries.

The publisher, faced with a lengthy battle with a top City law firm over a book of which only 300 copies were ever printed, has now thrown in the towel and has written to anyone who received *Citizen's Financial Futures* asking them to send it back and not go around quoting the offending paragraph.

Two copies are filed at the House of Commons. These, I understand, will not be returned. And I have one somewhere, and I am hanging on to it. So there.

MARTIN WALLER

SATURDAY.
ANYTHING
BUT A DAY
OF REST.

SPORT
Vision
WEEKEND
metro
the times
magazine
meg@

Restaurateurs are savouring the dining boom while the going is good, says Dominic Walsh

City queues up to devour a richer dish

Sir Terence Conran must be watching with bemusement as one London restaurateur after another cashes in his chips for ever-higher prices. The Browns chain, Daphne's, the Richoux Group, Café Pasha, The Ivy and Le Caprice are just some of the high-profile names that have changed — or are about to change — hands for equally high-profile sums of money.

The latest Sunday Times "rich list" valued Conran Holdings, which includes the Conran Shop retail business, at about £80 million, but the prices being paid for other London eateries — allied to expansion of the Conran empire since the survey was published in April — suggest that figure is decidedly conservative. Experts estimate that Conran Restaurants, including the Coq d'Argent, opening next month, and its Paris restaurant, which opens in October, could have an annualised turnover of £75 million. Valuing it on the same basis as Belgo Group's recent £9.3 million acquisition of the socialite Mogens Tholstrup's three London restaurants — Daphne's, Pasha and The Collection — which have a turnover of £8 million, gives a value of £87 million. But taking into account Conran's higher than average profit conversion rate and a premium for the "Conran factor" probably takes the figure past £100 million.

That is a huge valuation for just 12 restaurants, even allowing for the scale of Quaglino's and Mezzo and the rich promise of further openings at the Great Eastern Hotel in the City and in New York. However, the experience of Belgo suggests that a flotation — a move that Sir Terence has always steadfastly rejected — would produce an even more inflated valuation. Belgo, largely on the basis of the track record of its chairman, Luke Johnson, the PizzaExpress entrepreneur, is valued at £91 million yet, after the Tholstrup deal, it still has only five outlets.

But are such figures justified? Although the eating out boom appears to be robust, some observers believe a downturn is just around the corner and that many restaurateurs are simply cashing in while the going is good. Stuart



Good times roll: clockwise from left, Quaglino's in Central London; Belgo celebrates another purchase; while Le Caprice, Luke Johnson of PizzaExpress and Marco Pierre White prosper

Price, the brewing and restaurants analyst at Credit Suisse First Boston, is among the pessimists, believing that some of the sums being paid have a distinct top-of-the-market feel. He reckons that while some of the multiples of earnings being paid might appear reasonable, future trading patterns could make them less easy to justify. "I believe the next recession actually started some time ago," he said. "Over the past quarter restaurant volumes are down 3 per cent, and a lot of restaurants have definitely become a little emptier."

Although the dire weather and the World Cup have clearly had an effect, Mr Price also cites the decline in tourist figures as a worrying omen,

adding: "Even if we are in for a softer landing than many people are expecting, there is no doubt that business confidence is down and that means corporate expenses will start to tighten. This is not the best time to be buying upmarket concepts, which tend to be hit first in a slowdown."

But the man behind some of the deals has a different view. Andy Bassadone, chief executive of Belgo Group, is adamant that the figures stack up and that he and Mr Johnson are establishing a restaurant company with the legs and the strategy to prosper. Having brought the company to market just seven months ago, he has set about building up the company not only by develop-

ing new sites under the core Belgo *moules et frites* concept but also by acquiring a series of "signature" restaurants such as the Tholstrup trio. Earlier this week, it emerged that Belgo's next target is Caprice Holdings, owner of Le Caprice. The Ivy and the two Sheekeys' fish restaurants at a rumoured £15 million.

As with the Tholstrup deal, it would appear that the brains behind the restaurants — in this case Jeremy King and Chris Corbin — will take some of the purchase price in Belgo shares and remain at the helm of their individual businesses, a fact that Mr Bassadone argues is just as im-

portant as the restaurants themselves. "The deal with Mogens brought us £8 million of turnover and a boost to the strength of our management at a multiple of ten times future earnings. I think that's a reasonable price," Mr Bassadone said. He pointed out that although the restaurants acquired were not brands that could be rolled out on every high street, Pasha, which has a Moroccan theme, could be replicated in London's villages, such as Islington, Putney and Fulham. He declined to comment on the Caprice deal, but added: "We're only interested in doing deals that are earnings enhancing from the point of view of our shareholders. It's only interesting for us if it's got a good growth story and a track record. I don't think we'd want to pay more than ten times future earnings."

Paul Corrett, chief executive of Showtime Restaurants, owner of The Big Easy in Chelsea and the Italian Kitchen in Covent Garden, believes that one factor behind the spate of deals is the improvement in the restaurant sector's standing in the City and the growing professionalism that has become evident since the industry was ravaged in the last recession. He said: "I think the restaurant industry has joined the ranks of other industries in terms of being seriously financeable. That is why the stock market is backing the sector and fuelling deals."

But Mr Corrett, who for the time being is happy to keep Showtime private, gave warning of the problems that going public can throw up. "There is a great danger of a City-type effect which can drive expansion without sufficient infrastructure. That can dilute the quality of the offering." To some extent the recent deal frenzy is just a continuation of what had already been happening since the recession, whereby some of the big groups — the brewers in particular — snatched up fledgling brands at a premium and developed them into nationwide brands. One of the earliest such deals was Whitbread's ac-

THE SUNDAY TIMES

HER UNSUNG STORY

Exclusive extracts from a revealing new biography of Kiri Te Kanawa. News Review, tomorrow

CULTURE

No more Larkin about: Catherine Zeta Jones, America's new sweetheart

CULTURE

Gladiators: In Mongolia, their giant wrestlers are treated like pop stars

STYLE

It will survive: disco was never treated with the respect it deserved. Until now

PLUS

In your 12-section paper: News, Sport, Business, Money, Travel, Books, The Sunday Times and Appointments

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Time for Teare to bring Rank improvements

If only he would stop smiling, Andrew Teare's tenure as chief executive of Rank Group has been an almost unmitigated disaster since he took the helm in the spring of 1996. The shares had fallen from more than £5 to less than £3 before bid speculation, probably unfounded, sent them higher yesterday. Rank, one of Britain's biggest leisure groups, risks the ignominy of falling out of the FTSE 100 index when its constituent members are reviewed next month, so precipitous has been the decline in share price. A key acquisition has underlain profit expectations, suggesting that Rank may have overpaid. Since Teare joined the company, cracks have also appeared in his strategy at his previous billet, the building materials company English China Clays.



Andrew Teare needs more than a smile to impress the City

Yet Teare's demeanour at City briefings remains beatific. He smiles his way through presentations that show static profits despite rising investment and at least one profit warning. The smile will almost certainly be on offer again when Rank presents some interim figures on Tuesday that are expected to show no great improvement in the company's fortunes. Perhaps his face is simply that shape. "The problem is that he's got absolutely nothing to smile about," says one broker, who does not wish to be identified. "Certainly the shareholders aren't smiling."

On Tuesday the City is expecting to be presented with the usual picture. Profits before tax will be largely unchanged at between £85 million and £90 million, and there will be the usual spread of trading problems across the group's operations. Rank's nightclubs and the Baulin's holiday camps will have suffered from the poor weather this summer and competition from the World Cup.

The Tom Cobleigh pubs, bought for a chunky £96 million in 1996, are not thought to have done as well as the market had been promised. This, plus the £1 billion sale of Rank's hugely successful stake

in the Rank Xerox photocopying business, are among Teare's main moves since he joined, the last to free up capital to reinvest in the various leisure operations. The only bright spots should be the Odeon cinema chain, boosted by the success of blockbusters such as *Titanic*, and video duplication in the US. Rank is not allowed under Stock Exchange rules to discuss the interims until they are released to the market. But a recent circular from Lehman Brothers, the broker, pre-empted the figures with a profit downgrade for 1998 and 1999 and related the shares from neutral, which in City parlance is a negative stance, to

underperform, a very negative one. "We do not think that Rank shares are likely to outperform the market while so much investment is staked on a return to earnings growth in 2000," Fraser Ramsden, Lehman's leisure analyst, wrote. This was despite a promise from Sir Dennis Henderson, the chairman, in last year's annual report that 1998 would be a make-or-break time. He said that 1998 must be the year when "effort is translated into improved profits and, as that improvement becomes evident, it should be recognised by the financial markets". Sir Dennis brought in Teare as his chosen successor to Michael Gifford on the latter's

retirement, and it is at Teare that most of the brickbats have been aimed. "Either he hasn't got control of his employees in the various divisions or he simply isn't aware of what's going on," said our unnamed analyst. He said managers have been able to make excuses for their underperformance in a way that would be unthinkable at other leisure groups with stronger central management, such as Granada. "There doesn't seem to be an element of urgency that there ought to be, and it affects Rank's credibility on the stock market," he said. "In the full year it doesn't look like the returns are going to come through as they should."

Teare's tenure at English China Clays saw him try to take an underperforming conglomerate and focus it on higher value operations. He made two big acquisitions while making himself extremely unpopular with a thousand redundancies in Devon and Cornwall. "The strategy of buying into chemicals wasn't a terrible idea," says one ECC insider. "But having bought it, the integration of the management was a problem." Teare's departure was swiftly followed by a profit warning.

Sir Dennis says: "I can't talk about the results, but there's been a lot of ill-informed speculation. The right strategy is on track. Andrew is the chief executive. He is supported by the board and by myself. I believe he will come through this. "If you are asking me, is he about to get the chop, the answer is no."

It must be said in Teare's favour that Rank's trading is heavily skewed towards the second half of the financial year, so it is too soon to say, with the benefit of the first-half results, whether Sir Dennis's promises for the current year will be fulfilled. "They always have a third-quarter trading update in November," said the anonymous analyst. "If things haven't picked up by then, the calls will be very, very loud for something to happen."

- 1962: Born, Worthing, Sussex. Educated Hingwood School, Bath, and University College, London.
- 1964: Joined Turner & Newall as graduate trainee.
- 1972: General manager, Roadstone, Cornwall.
- 1978: Appointed Roadstone Centre's general manager, Europe.
- 1982: Assistant managing director, Rugby Group, MD in 1984.
- 1986: Chief executive, English China Clays.
- 1988: Chief executive, Rank Group.

MARTIN WALLER

City falters
for leads

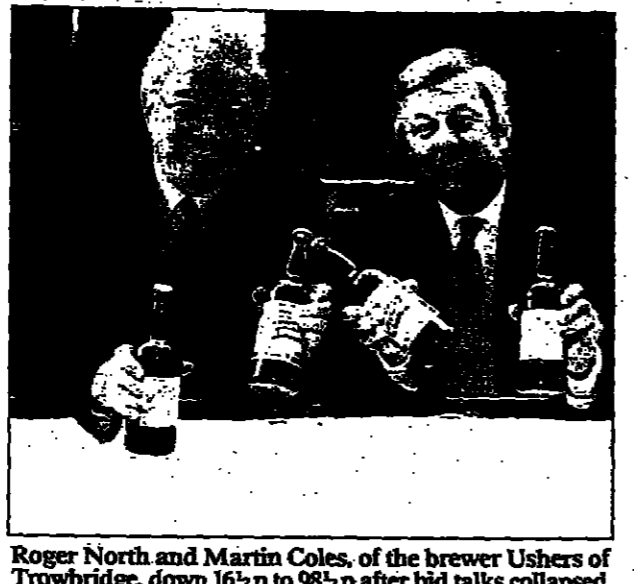


STOCK MARKET THE DEAR

Stock Market Writer of the Year

Rally falters as banking sector leads shares down

ANY hopes that investors may have nurtured that the equity market was capable of extending the rally of the past few days were quickly dashed yesterday. Share prices rounded off another difficult week for traders by beating a ragged retreat...



Roger North and Martin Coles, of the brewer Ushers of Trowbridge, down 16 1/2p to 98 1/2p after bid talks collapsed

late on Thursday to affect the share price, but the regional brewer paid the price when trading resumed yesterday, ending 16 1/2p down at 98 1/2p. Radius, already on the receiving end of a 35p-a-share bid from Sudair, put in a late run, finishing 6 1/2p up at 52 1/2p...

UPF Group retreated 6 1/2p to 85p after saying that results for the year to August 31 will fall short of market forecasts because of problems created by production changeovers. Cambridge Mineral Resources recovered its poise to close unchanged at 8 1/4p...

There were also setbacks for Abbey National, down 4 1/2p to 111 1/2p. Bank of Scotland down 3 1/2p to 67 1/2p. Northern Rock down 2 1/2p to 53 1/2p...

MAJOR INDICES

Table listing major indices: New York (midday), Dow Jones, S&P Composite, Hong Kong, Nikkei Average, etc.

RECENT ISSUES

Table listing recent issues: AdVal Group, Anglo Siberian Oil, Baldwin Indl Svs, etc.

RIGHTS ISSUES

Table listing rights issues: Metrolife n/p (25c) 84c, etc.

MAJOR CHANGES

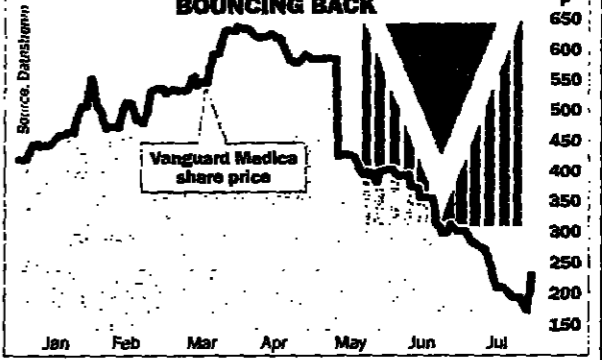
Table listing major changes: RISES: Vanguard 237 1/2 (+52p), etc.

TEMPUS

Black horse stumbles

AFTER being wide of the mark with their forecasts for both Abbey National and Halifax, banking analysts were none too impressed to find Lloyds TSB had done worse than expected. An element of pique was evident in the decision by many brokers to downgrade the stock, helping to wipe about £4 billion from its capital value.

There are more to Lloyds TSB's fall from grace than City irritation. Many followers of the banks believe that the whole sector needs a detaching, given the likelihood of an economic downturn over the next year. Even the usually bullish Peter Ellwood, the Lloyds TSB chief executive, cautioned of tough times ahead.



THIRTY-SIX hours ago, Vanguard Medica looked a bargain, its price having collapsed from 642 1/2p to 188p since April. A tip yesterday sparked a sharp recovery to 237 1/2p...

Lex Service

NOW the UK's largest car leasing company, Lex Service has dismissed the gloom enveloping most of its competitors because of the collapse in second-hand car prices. It insists that the majority of its earnings come from vehicle management and it has hardly any exposure to used cars...

Greggs

DESPITE unfavourable weather and higher than expected costs of commissioning its new savouries operation in Newcastle upon Tyne, Greggs remains confident of extending its impressive run. First-half profits up another 14.7 per cent to £6.1 million...

Table with columns: COCA, COCA, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: LLOYDS TSB, BRITISH TELECOM, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: GINI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: DOLLAR RATES, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: WALL STREET, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: LONDON METAL EXCHANGE, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: MONEY RATES (%), etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%), etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co), etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: FTSE VOLUMES, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Prime Bank Bill (91d), etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: M&I Rates for July 31, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

Table with columns: Sterling Spot and Forward Rates, etc. Values: 115.75, 115.75, etc.

سكذامنالإقبل

THE TIMES TODAY

SATURDAY AUGUST 1 1998

NEWS

The monarch as a people's Queen

Those determined to portray the monarch as a people's Queen could hardly have designed a more populist day out for her yesterday: she spent the morning in Ellesmere Port, shopping for kitchenware and a pair of trainers, sustaining herself with a visit to a drive-in McDonald's. Princess of Wales. Typically on an awayday, the Queen now meets far more ordinary people in everyday situations and far fewer flunkys Pages 1, 8

Yard 'framed' notorious robbers

A gun was planted on two of Britain's most notorious armed robbers to frame them for a post office attack, according to allegations being investigated by Scotland Yard's anti-corruption detectives Page 1

Hamburger ruling

Writers in restaurants and cooks in hamburger joints must in future warn customers who like their meat rare that they are running a health risk Page 3

Smuggler moved

The convicted drug smuggler Sandra Gregory has been moved to a high-security unit amid fears of an escape attempt Page 4

Viagra seized

The first seizure in Britain of the anti-impotency drug, Viagra, has been made at a bookshop in Soho, London Page 5

Bacon puzzle

The art world is divided over the authenticity of a collection of 500 works said to be by the modern master Francis Bacon Page 6

Trust appointment

A businessman who invites young criminals for holidays at his home has been appointed to head the Prince's Trust Page 8

The funny side of Adolf Hitler ...

Should Germans make fun of Adolf Hitler? A new fast-selling comic book entitled Adolf is putting this idea to the test, wallowing in bad taste but also raising a few furtive chuckles from a nation that has been taught to treat the Führer as the last great taboo Page 11

Clinton confident

In a confident declaration, President Clinton told the United States yesterday that he was 'looking forward' to testifying about Monica Lewinsky Page 10

Rosary redesigned

Jewellers in Milan have designed a rosary shaped like a credit card to appeal to modern Roman Catholics Page 11

Envoy resigns

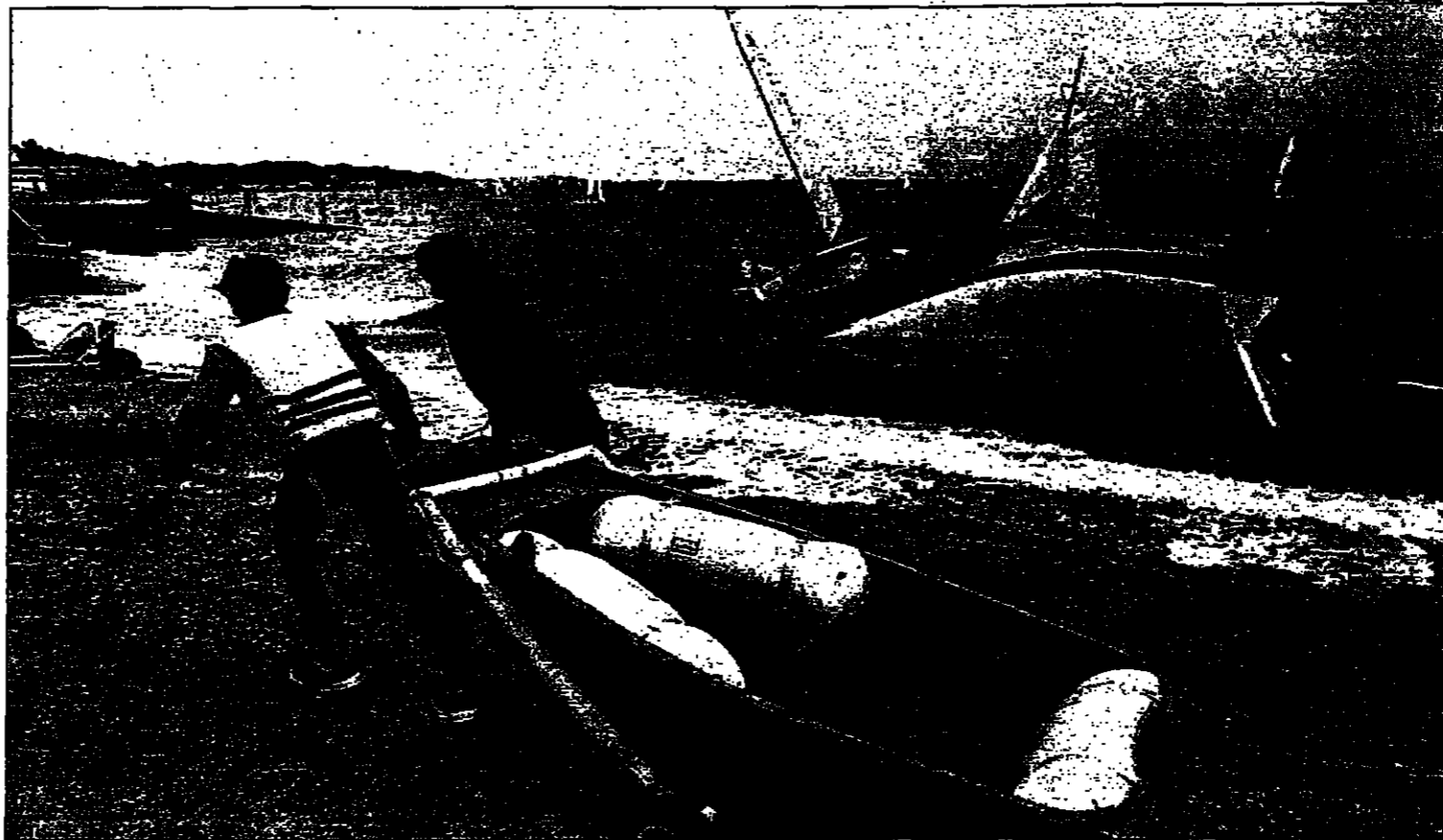
Sir David Gore-Booth, Britain's High Commissioner to India, has announced that he is leaving the Foreign Office Page 13

New roads scrapped

More than two thirds of the Government's road-building programme has been shelved after a year-long review Pages 14, 15

Hangman remembers

When you go to hang a boy of 19 years old, it does not matter that he is tall and broad, he still looks only a boy Page 16



Sailors at the Young Dinghy Week at the Gurnard Sailing Club near Cowes. Their race yesterday was cancelled because of strong winds

Holiday mythology

Tony Blair today leaves behind disputes over welfare reform and his reshuffle to arrive in San Gimignano with his family for their third summer holiday in Tuscany. Many Italians are delighted that the Prime Minister is so loyal to the region, but others are baffled by his attachment to the 'Tuscan myth' Page 12

Class actors

Their fans are still in mourning, but, for the cast of This Life, life has never looked sweeter. They are the most sought-after actors in Britain Page 17

In search of Blair

Mr Blair could find himself adopting proportional representation and a single currency out of convenience Page 19

Passage from India

Real ambassadors appear eager to move into the real world of business Pages 13, 19

Make a pig of yourself

If Britons want to reward farmers, they must go the whole hog Page 19

Simon Jenkins: Art is not art

because an artist says so, but at the whim of an official Page 18

Ben MacIntyre: Mr Blair and M Jospin

were not the first to find that mixing languages can be a double-edged sword of Damocles Page 18

Amital Elkowitz: If there is one subject

on which Americans outdo the Brits, it is corruption Page 18

Jobs: Siemens

the German industrial giant, is to sell or close a microchip plant on Timeside that employs 1,100 people Page 23

Lloyds TSB: Shares fell

to 83p after a £400 million provision was made for mis-selling pensions Page 23

Markets: The FTSE-100 index

fell 73.7 points to close at 5837.0 Page 27

Football: Uefa will respond

to the threat of a breakaway by improving the rewards in their existing competitions Page 29

Motor racing: Damon Hill

shined on the first day of practice for the German Grand Prix Page 31

Cricket: Surrey seem certain

to strengthen their position in the county championship Page 33

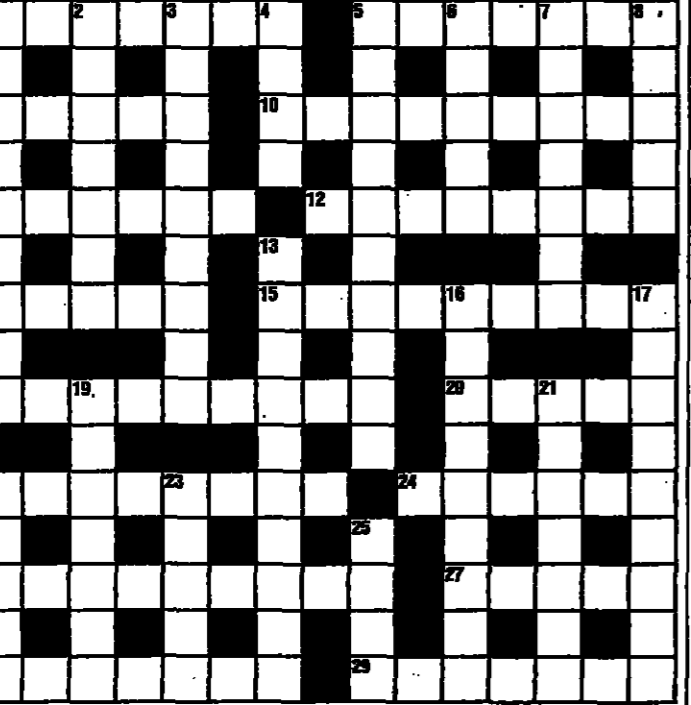
Monsieur Spider Man: Bill Thomas

drives Renault's new wild thing Page 43

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,859

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address



- ACROSS
1 Boat needing reliable guide past Cape (7)
5 Business risks apparent in these books (7)
9 You are told Oxford course is held in only part of Oxford (5)
10 Family members returning rubbish to current supplier (9)
11 Youngster woman's held to be a beautiful child (6)
12 Head spy making trouble (8)
14 A land encountered in middle of sea passage (5)
15 Peak of classical poetry (9)
18 Payment method, being fashionable, suited one? (5,4)
20 Finish by executing guy (3,2)
22 Sounds interesting for youth - and for dad, apparently (5,5)
24 Better following horse (6)
26 Inspiring memories of detective's last case (9)
27 Move round to back of performing canine (5)
28 Crooked senator that's never prosperous? (7)
29 Not quite perfect chamber musician (7)

Solution to Puzzle No 20853



LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: S Shelton, Hangerford, Derby; P J R Dava, Culverston, Northfleet; C Kennedy, Hollywood, N Ireland; J Y Grills, Llanwrda, Lelcis M Sands, Hyles, Cornwall.

Table with 4 columns: UK Weather - All regions, UK Roads - All regions, M25 and Link Roads, National Motorways, Commercial Services, Channel crossing, Hooting to Heathers & Goodie spots. Includes phone numbers.

Table with 4 columns: Weather by Fax, World City Weather, Motorizing, Car reports by fax. Includes phone numbers and service details.

Table with 2 columns: Sun sets, Moon sets. Includes times and dates for today and tomorrow.

Table with 2 columns: Sun sets, Moon sets. Includes times and dates for today and tomorrow.

Table with 4 columns: TODAY, TOMORROW. Includes AM, HT, PM, HT times for various cities.

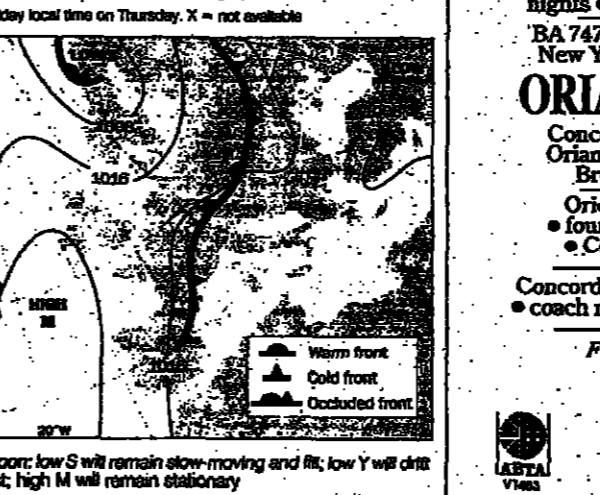
Table with 4 columns: TODAY, TOMORROW. Includes AM, HT, PM, HT times for various cities.

General: heavy showers over much of the country. North and southwest England will have sun later. Strong risk of thunder in east and south. Showers in Scotland and Northern Ireland will become isolated.

Table with 4 columns: Sun, Rain, Wind, Max. Includes weather symbols and forecasts for various regions.

Table with 4 columns: Sun, Rain, Wind, Max. Includes weather symbols and forecasts for various regions.

Table with 4 columns: Sun, Rain, Wind, Max. Includes weather symbols and forecasts for various regions.



SECTIONS the times magazine

Chanel crossing: the 20-year-old Erin O'Connor is Karl Lagerfeld's latest muse Page 6
Melody maker: can Chris Blackwell rebuild his music empire? Page 16
Spoils of war: the lawyer ruined trying to recover looted Nazi art Page 24

Big interview: the actor Stephen Dillane favours theatre over film any day Page 6
Wayne's world: Wayne Marshall is conducting the Proms Page 14
Zoom with a view: the last in our four-part series on photography Page 24

WEEKEND
Puffin hunt: Richard Middleton has trouble going for the kill Page 1
Empire in the sun: the Forte and Shawcross families have set up camp in Cornwall Page 2
Body and soul: a man with a shoe fetish Page 4
Behind bars: Britain's top jail birds Page 19

Vision
Seven-day listing of radio and 40 TV channels
meg@
MON-STAR - how they gave life to Godzilla

super L

Advertisement for 'super L' featuring a portrait of a man.



ORIENT-EXPRESS
Orient-Express to Southampton on 15 September
four night QE2 cruise to Barcelona via Ibiza
Concorde supersonic to Heathrow £1,699

THE ROCKIES & TORONTO
Fly to Edmonton on 18 September
one night in Jasper, Banff, Kalowna and Vancouver
Concorde supersonic to Toronto £1,999

ORIANA & ORIENT-EXPRESS
Concorde to Santiago on 13 October
three night Oriana cruise to Southampton via La Rochelle and Brest
Orient-Express to Victoria £1,499



هوكذا من زليميل

1 AUGUST 1998

SECTION the times

Chanel crossing the... Erin O'Connor...
Melody makers call...
Sports of war: the...
Nazi art...

metro

Sig interview: the...
Wayne's world: Ni...
Zoom with a view: the...
Community...

WEEKEND

Puffin hunt: Rick...
Empires in the...
Body and soul: a...
Behind bars: Britain's...

Vision

Monday living of...
and 40 TV channels

MON-STAR - how the...
live life to Goddard

UNDER THE SKIN OF SPORT

Sitting pretty
Gough gets back in the swing
PAGE 32

Sailing away
Has the tide turned against Cowes Week?
PAGE 37

Schumacher on familiar territory
PAGE 31

WEEKEND MONEY

CARPETBAGGING: THE LATEST SUMMER SPORT
PAGE 56

go

DRIVING TO PARIS TO MEET SPIDERMAN
PAGE 43

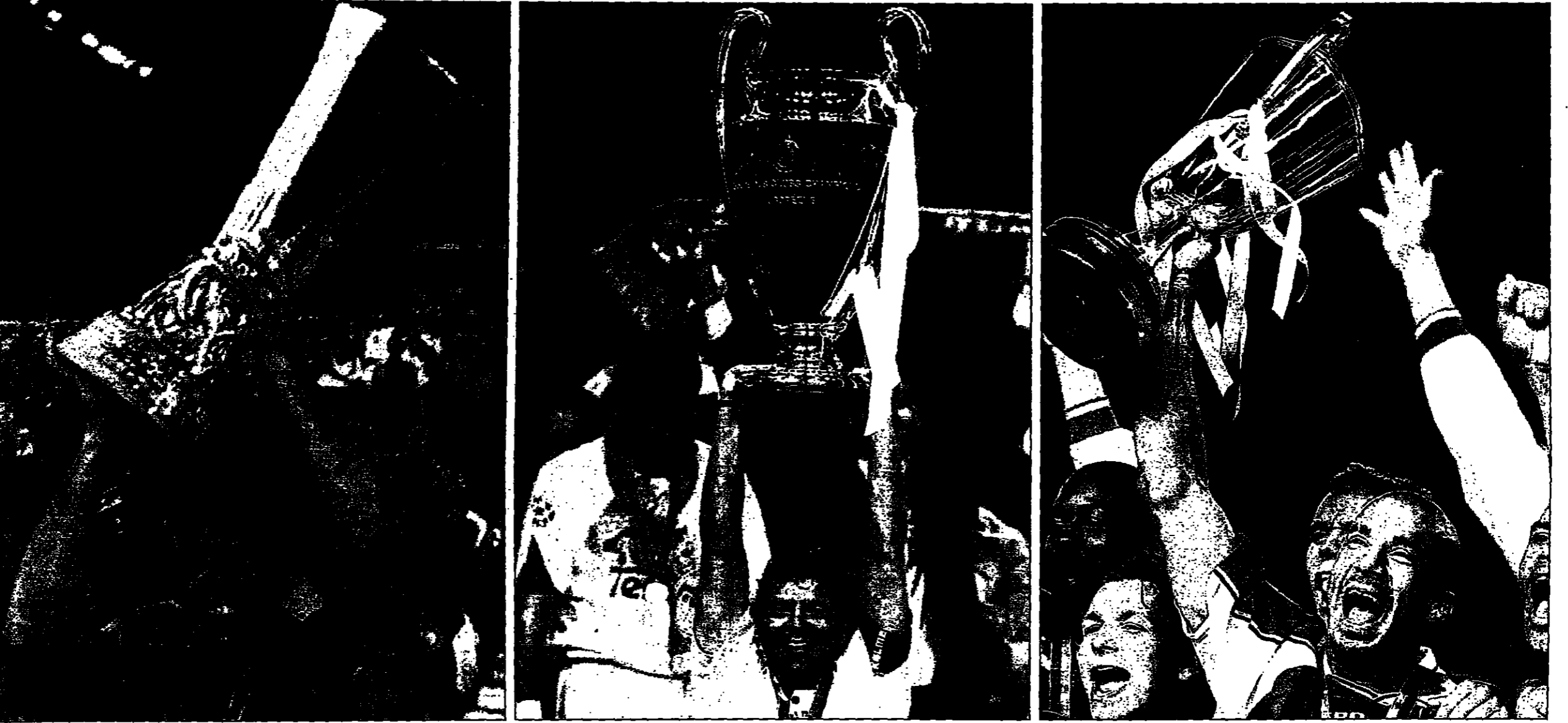


THE TIMES SATURDAY SPORT

AUGUST 1 1998

EUROPEAN GIANTS WILL BE OFFERED INCENTIVES TO STAY

Super League: Uefa fights back



Family silver: Uefa is proud of its competitions. Would automatic entry make winning the Uefa Cup as sweet for Ronaldo, of Internazionale, left; or the European Cup for Sanchis, of Real Madrid; or the Cup Winners' Cup for Vialli, of Chelsea

UEFA, the governing body of European football, is ready to take on the growing threat of a breakaway super league. Gerd Aigner, the general secretary of Uefa, said yesterday that his organisation will fight to keep control of its business, its Champions' League and its authority.

Aigner says that Uefa is prepared to negotiate with the leading clubs and give them more money and more say in the format. "All things are negotiable, except the principle of permanent involvement for a minority," he said. "Uefa will never give way to clubs who think they have a right to play in the competitions without qualifying year by year."

Speaking from his office in Nyon, near Lake Geneva, Aigner had anything but the air of a man in the way of a runaway super league train loaded with billion-dollar bankers and television moguls.

"It would be irresponsible for clubs to join up with people whose league is not a reality, and who have no experience of living in the world of football, where there are tensions between the clubs, the leagues and the national associations," he said. "I say to them: 'Why give up what you have? Come and talk, but let's get to the real elements.' The alternative could be a shambles."

Uefa's contracts run until 2000, but Aigner accepts that time is of the essence. He has been told that there is a proposed October 1 deadline, the date on which those behind the super league may publicly declare its existence. Uefa acknowledges that there may be clubs, possibly Manchester United and Arsenal among them, using the cover of a super league to try to extract larger profits for themselves once the Champions' League is re-negotiated for 2000.

"We have an attractive product - that's why they [the super league proponents] want it," Aigner said. "We

Rob Hughes talks to the man who is standing up to the tycoons and clubs who are trying to change the face of European football

know the clubs want more money. For some there is never enough. I think the clubs are being incited, but we are not unprepared. I sent someone to study what happened in rugby in Australia a couple of years ago and there are very similar attempts now in European football between those who want the money and those who have it."

Aigner has received letters from the Football Association, the FA Premier League and from other countries, too, which, he says, plead for help. "I expect we shall be kept quite

occupied with this over the coming weeks," he said. "What is happening tells us that we are not at the point where we have everything right, so we would like to listen to all parties - the clubs, the leagues and the national associations. What must be clear is that we have a duty to all areas of the game and we cannot give way to theoretical leagues. We will talk, but let us get to the real reasons and to realistic demands."

Aigner's insistence that the principle of clubs having to qualify year by year, however,

conflicts directly with the aim of Silvio Berlusconi, the Italian who has instigated the move towards a super league. Berlusconi has been trying for years, but it has become urgent for him now that his own club, AC Milan, has failed to qualify for the Champions' League. Berlusconi is behind the media group that, together with J.P. Morgan, the investment bank, has been surreptitiously meeting with elite clubs and, coincidentally, he also owns a television franchise.

Uefa is wary of Berlusconi's

global reach, of his known links with Leo Kirch, the German media magnate, and with Rupert Murdoch, who is the biggest shareholder of News Corporation, the parent company of BSkyB and The Times. But whoever is willing to back a breakaway league, they need clubs such as Manchester United. The pot of gold for winning it would be £60 million and the overall investment for setting it up, £2 billion.

Aigner said: "There is a serious threat. If the presence of Manchester United or Real

Madrid is not guaranteed, you cannot pay some outsiders to launch such a venture, but, as Europe's governing body, we cannot agree a concept that does not involve qualification. It goes against the credibility of all competition and, in our case, where we have to satisfy the grass roots of football and we must protect the national identities of the associations. We have to listen to opinions and balance the needs for the good of the game."

"What we offer is continuity of integrity. We will not allow football to be torn apart into different fragments and I'm sorry to say that, after the European Commission rubbed the face of football into the dirt [over the Bosman ruling], we have become quite hardened to our task."

Aigner and Lennart Johansson, the president of Uefa, admit that the title "Champions' League" has invited criticism since it allowed not only national champions but also the runners-up. "We may have to look, among other things, on changing the name of the competition," Aigner said. "It could become simply the European League."

"One thing that we will ask the clubs is: do you agree with the solidarity project? Up to now, it has been agreed that they give a percentage to less developed clubs and associations. We must not force this concept on them, we must persuade because football is a movement, an organic process that grows from the bottom up and it is the task of administration not to allow it to die at that level."

With regards to the English game, Aigner will press again the case for a reduction in the FA Carling Premiership to 18 clubs. "There are now only two leagues in Europe, England and Spain, with more than 18. It is obvious to all that at the end of the season the English players are dead and, in this respect we can try to oblige them to help themselves."

Liverpool still keen on Kohler

BY MATT DICKINSON

LIVERPOOL are attempting to revive a deal that would bring Jürgen Kohler, the experienced German defender, to Anfield. The 32-year-old Borussia Dortmund player, widely regarded as one of Europe's best central defenders, has long been coveted by the FA Carling Premiership club, but the transfer fee has been a stumbling block.

Now the German side's £3 million asking price may be reduced for a player who has won more than 100 caps for his country and played in the World Cup finals this summer.

Liverpool are also on the trail of Richard Dutruac, a former France Under-21 goalkeeper, who plays in Spain for Celta Vigo. The 25-year-old, who is 6ft 4in, is well known by Gerard Houllier, the new joint-manager of Liverpool, from his time at Paris Saint-Germain.

The arrival of Dutruac would almost certainly end David James' spell at Liverpool. James was demoted to second-choice goalkeeper last season behind Brad Friedel, the United States international.

Arsenal refused to be drawn yesterday on reports linking them with Marcelo Gallardo, the Argentina forward. Agents acting for the 22-year-old are believed to be offering his services to

European clubs, including several in the Premiership. Gallardo, of River Plate, was used mainly as a substitute in the World Cup, including the game against England. Expected to cost £5 million, he plays just behind the main strikers and would be a perfect stand-in for Dennis Bergkamp.

Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, may depart early from the club's Scandinavian tour to begin negotiations with Patrick Klauert, who is available for £9 million. The Holland

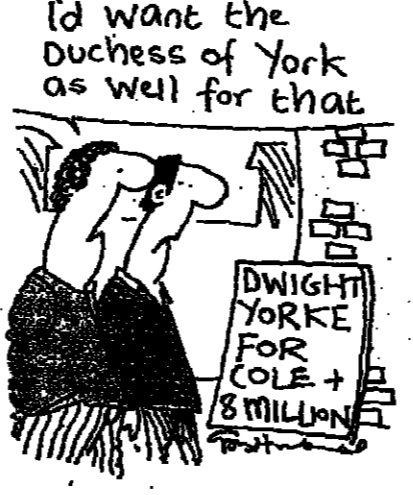
striker is expected back from holiday at AC Milan on Monday.

Ferguson has denied offering Andy Cole in a swap deal for Dwight Yorke, the Aston Villa striker, but his version of events has been disputed by the Midlands club. John Gregory, the Villa manager, still expects the Trinidad and Tobago international to depart for Old Trafford and revealed he had originally asked for David Beckham in exchange.

"Sure I asked about Beckham, Roy Keane and Nicky Butt," he said. "I told them that if they want my best player, I'll have one of theirs in exchange. It was them that first mentioned Andy Cole."

Chelsea's cosmopolitan squad will be augmented by Mikael Forssell, a Finn, in November after they secured the 17-year-old forward on a five-year contract. Forssell, who scored four goals on his debut for Finland Under-18 against Lithuania this week, will finish studying before his free transfer from HJK Helsinki.

Ronald and Frank de Boer will continue their attempt to extract themselves from six-year contracts with Ajax when they meet club officials on Monday. The Holland players failed this week to persuade a Dutch Football Association tribunal to release them from their present agreements. Barcelona are interested in signing both brothers.



ORIENT-EXPRESS
TORONTO
NEW YORK

Rich, stylish, full of taste: the South of France in a (glass) nutshell.
Ah, the South of France. Fabulous scenery. Beautiful people. The swank and bustle of the world's most famous riviera, and away from it, some of the oldest vineyards in the country transformed by a quiet revolution. There, James Herrick has created a Chardonnay that does full justice to its unique environment. Mediterranean sunshine in a bottle. A beguiling, citrusy freshness broadening into a rich and mellow balance of tropical fruit and spice. Suddenly you can see yourself in Aix or Cannes. All you need are glasses.
James Herrick CHARDONNAY 1996
THE PICK OF THE SOUTH OF FRANCE
AVAILABLE COUNTRYWIDE FROM SUPERMARKETS, SPECIALIST CHAINS AND MAJOR INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS

GOLF: CURTIS CUP RIVALRY RESUMES WITH BRITAIN AND IRELAND SEEKING TO RETAIN TROPHY

Visitors can cap decade of success

ONE of the most impressive yet least known records in golf is that women amateurs from Great Britain and Ireland have not lost a Curtis Cup match to the United States for eight years. Two victories and a tie have been achieved in the Nineties and a third victory is being sought in the thirtieth match in the series, which will unfold here over the next two days at the Minikahda Golf Club, which takes its name from the Sioux word for running water.

Actually, the record can be made to look even more impressive, because Great Britain and Ireland have lost only one Curtis Cup match since 1984, breathing life into what had become a competition lopsided in favour of the United States.

There was an historic victory in Kansas 12 years ago, the first on American soil, and a successful defence at Sandwich two years later. In 1990, the United States won at Somerset Hills, New Jersey, only for Great Britain and

Ireland to win again in 1992 and 1996, after halving a thrilling match in Tennessee in 1994.

There are many reasons for such a marked change of fortune, but the most obvious is an improvement in the standard of golf in Europe. Yet there has also been greater attention to detail and improved planning as more



Chwasirporm: runner-up

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT
IN MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

money, some of it from the Royal and Ancient Golf Club (R and A), has become available.

In recent years, the Ladies Golf Union has devoted more money to training teams as well as preparing them more professionally, taking advice from Mickey Walker, the former Solheim Cup captain, and Tommy Horton.

For example, this team spent time in an environmental heat chamber at Loughborough University to acclimatise the players to anticipated climatic conditions — and it is hot here, though not as hot as it was at Quaker Ridge for the Walker Cup last August and not quite as hot as had been expected. Paris of Texas may be sweltering in temperatures of 40C, but for the past few days here, the temperature has been in the high 70s on the Fahrenheit scale and dry with it. The forecast is for more of the same.

Rebecca Hudson, 19, is the youngest member of a Great Britain and Ireland team whose average age is 24. The United States team, with an average age of 29, possesses both the youngest and the oldest competitors. Beth Bauer, the 1997 US Girls' junior champion, is 18, while Carol Semple Thompson, the US Women's mid-amateur champion, is 49. She is setting a record for longevity for she made her debut in 1974. Her tenth appearance takes her past Mary McKenna's record of nine successive matches for Great Britain and Ireland between 1970 and 1986.

The United States were first on the course for the last day of practice — at 7.30am — followed by the visitors 90 minutes later. As the pace of preparation heated up, the players spent the last hours before the flag-raising ceremony got under way by sharpening their short games.

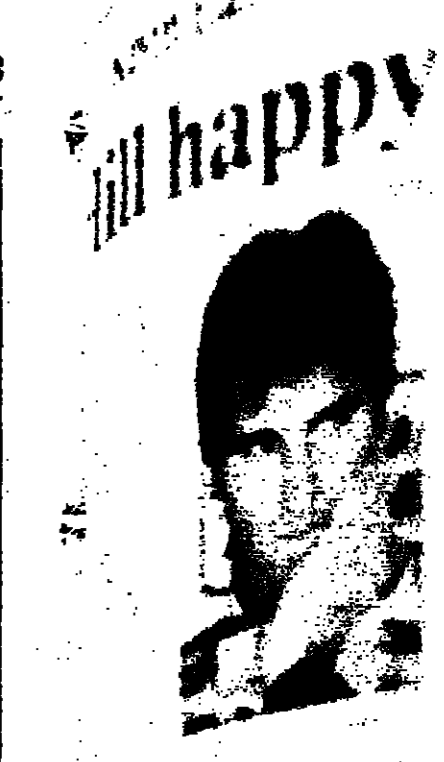
If the Walker Cup match last year can be used as a yardstick, then making sure that drives end on fairways and not in the rough will be more important than length off the tee. "Accuracy is going to be very important," Ita Butler, the Great Britain and Ireland captain, said. "Patience and concentration too."

UNITED STATES	
Elizabeth Bauer	(18, Cranston, NH, Canada)
Kelise Booth	(27, Palo Alto, CA, California)
Robin Barrie	(32, Houston, Texas)
Jenny Chastellon	(21, Toronto, Ontario, Canada)
Viviana Grimes	(34, Montgomery, Alabama)
Brenda Kuhn	(33, Fletcher, NH, Canada)
Ina Robertson	(22, Cranston, NH, Canada)
Carol Semple Thompson	(49, Sewdley, Pennsylvania)
Captain: Barbara McIntyre	(Colorado Springs)
GB & IRELAND	
Flora Brown	(24, Hemeck, Illinois)
Rebecca Hudson	(19, Wexley, Wiltshire, England)
Hilary Monaghan	(23, Harold Wat Uxw, Essex, England)
Betty Morgan	(25, Monrovia, Liberia)
Barbara Ratcliffe	(25, Sandberg, Minnesota)
Allen Ross	(30, Strickland, Ontario, Canada)
Tom Rossiter	(29, Ontario, Canada)
Karen Stupples	(25, Royal Cinque Ports, Kent, England)
Captain: Ita Butler	(28, Park, Dublin, Ireland)

Fogarty snatches lap record with late run

MOTORCYCLING: Carl Fogarty broke the Brands Hatch lap record and secured the quickest time in the first qualifying session for the British round of the Superbike world championship tomorrow. The Blackburn rider struggled to stay in the top ten until the last three minutes of the session, but then powered his Ducati round the 2.6-mile track to take first place.

Fogarty, 32, the world champion in 1994 and 1995, is fourth in the series this year before the ninth-round double-header tomorrow, but is still within reach of the leaders with eight more races to come after Brands Hatch. "Tony Cossetti of Australia, leads the series after finishing in first and second places in the last round at Laguna Seca, California," said Fogarty. "I was in the top ten, but I'm racing at Brands Hatch against medical advice after suffering foot and leg injuries in the United States. Steve Hislop was second in qualifying yesterday on his Yamaha and was joined in the top ten by two other British riders, Neil Hodgson and Niall Mackenzie.



Wiggins misses out

ICYCLING: Bradley Wiggins, who has won four national track titles in Manchester since his world championship victory two weeks ago in the junior 3,000 metres pursuit, misses a chance today of a fifth British title. (Peter Bryan writes) Wiggins, 18, had decided to compete tonight in the senior Madison, which ends the nine-day series, but Bryan Steel, his partner, had to withdraw after an operation for an ingrown toenail. Wiggins makes his road time-trial debut tomorrow in the British junior 25-mile event near Bedford.

Brazilian deputy

MOTOR SPORTS: Flavio Figueiredo, of Brazil, is to drive the Vauxhall Vectra of John Cleland in the two rounds of the Auto Trader RAC British Touring Car championship at Thruxton this weekend. Cleland, twice a champion and lying sixth in the standings, broke a rib at Snetterton last Sunday and, despite having painkilling injections, has had to withdraw from the race. "I'm bitterly disappointed," Cleland said. Alain Menu will have to race in the spare Renault car after escaping unhurt from a 125mph crash caused by a burst tyre in final testing.

Petchey to retire

TENNIS: Mark Petchey, the former Davis Cup player, is to retire from playing to become a commentator for Eurosport. Petchey, 28, from Essex, who reached the highest ranking of his career, No 80, in 1994, made a farewell appearance in the Challenger tournament at Newcastle last week. As a junior, he won four singles and eight doubles national titles before turning professional in 1987. He reached three quarter-finals and two semi-finals in ATP Tour events and the third round of the singles at Wimbledon in 1997.

England name squad

RUGBY UNION: Chris Sheehy, the Harlequins back-row forward, is the senior member of the squad named yesterday to represent England in the Commonwealth Games seven-a-side tournament in Kuala Lumpur next month. It includes Brian Taylor, the former British 'decaathlon' champion, who is now working in New Zealand and playing provincial rugby for Otago. Sheehy is the only full-back named in the squad.

ENGLAND SQUAD: Backs: 15 (Brian Taylor), 16 (Chris Sheehy), 17 (Mark Bennett), 18 (David Gray), 19 (Nicklas Bendtzen), 20 (Gavin Hastings), 21 (Michael Morgan), 22 (Alan Tait). Forwards: 23 (Robbie Hogg), 24 (Simon Daniell), 25 (Gavin Hastings), 26 (Simon Daniell), 27 (Duncan Hogg), 28 (Duncan Hogg), 29 (Duncan Hogg).

Hull lines up bonus

SHOOTER: Robin Hull, the former world junior champion, from Finland, booked a place in the fourth qualifying round of the 1998 Grand Prix with a 5-1 victory over Craig MacGillivray, from Edinburgh, at Plymouth. The highlight of Hull's win was a 139 clearance in the third frame, which puts him in line to collect a bonus of £1,100 for the highest break in the pre-telvised rounds. Hull, 23, next meets Marco Fu, the world amateur champion, from Hong Kong.

Thompson shows way

SWIMMING: Jennifer Thompson, below, clocked the fourth-fastest 4 x 100 medley relay butterfly split-time in history as the United States beat the World All Stars 65-57 to stay on course for the gold medal at the Goodwill Games in East Meadow, New York. The five-times Olympic champion helped her country to win the relay with a split of 53.33sec for the butterfly leg. She also won the 100 metres butterfly in 58.72sec, the twelfth-fastest time on record, and anchored the 4 x 100 freestyle relay team to victory.

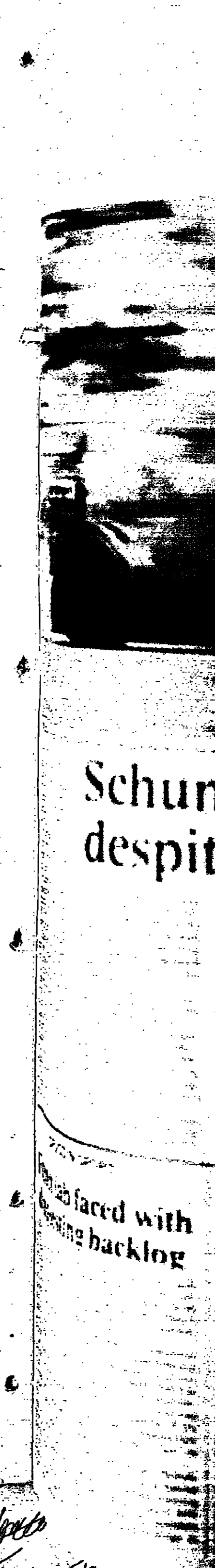


Moss fails to secure medal in tight finish

THERE are some who contend that there is nothing wrong with British athletics that the emergence of a new middle-distance hero would not cure. (Steven Downes writes) Last night, in the 800 metres final at the world junior championships in Arney, France, Chris Moss did his utmost to fill the role, losing out only narrowly in a battle down the home straight for bronze.

Moss finished sixth in Imrn 48.77sec, a personal best, behind William Chirchir, of Kenya, who won in Imrn 47.23sec. Chirchir reflects the strength of Kenyan running, for he is the Kenya schools' decathlon champion.

Alloy Wilson, Moss's club colleague, was seventh in the 400 metres final, recording a lifetime best of 46.04sec in a race won by Nnaka Awazie, of Nigeria, in 45.54sec.



Spence ruled out in aftermath of bent club mystery

FROM MEL WEBB IN STOCKHOLM

THE second round of the Volvo Scandinavian Masters turned into a slightly damp mélange of this and that yesterday, with nobody finding enough thrust to make much of a positive move. There were a couple of those glorious eccentricities that make golf the wonderful, frustrating game that it is and, by way of a diversion, a great Spanish golfer lurched out of the tournament after playing like the most doggedly awful amateur.

As though José María Olazábal had not feature in the day's action, having added a 174 on Thursday's 70 to finish 11 over 166 shots off the lead, he also had a part to play in Rules Story No.1.

On the 5th, the ball belonging to Matthias Gronberg, of Sweden, was sitting on the front apron of the green minding its own business when it was shunted off its spot by a ball that had been struck by Raymond Russell, the third member of the group.

Gronberg was about to play the ball from where it lay when the ever-vigilant Olazábal performed just about

his only useful act of the day when he observed that he did not think the ball should be played from where it was, but instead replaced on the spot whence it had come. The problem was that Gronberg did not know exactly where the ball had been, so after guidance from a rules official, he took a drop.

If Gronberg had played the ball from where it was, he would have incurred a two-shot penalty, which would have prevented him from taking a share of the clubhouse.

The clubhouse was full of England on 137, five under par. Olazábal might not have

been much good at playing golf yesterday, but he was a veritable demon with the rule book. Were he not usually such a fine player, he would make an absolutely top-class shop steward.

Then there was the strange case of Jamie Spence and Rules Story No.2. Spence's caddy noticed as her boss walked off the 18th green, having completed a 72 to finish on level par for the tournament, that the shaft of his sand-woodge was bent.

Condemnation ensued for it was not clear whether the shaft had been out of shape before Spence started his round; if it had been, he was disqualified under the edict laid down by Rule 4-1 (b), which bans on about clubs having straight shafts. If it had been given its new shape in the normal course of play, he was safe under the strictures of Rule 4-1 (g).

On the other hand, if Spence, who is an Arsenal supporter and therefore a man of calm and placid disposition, had had a fit of pique during the 18 holes and bent the club on purpose, then he had to be sent off, never to return for the rest of the tournament.

Spence did not remember having a sense of humour failure with the club during his round and it was therefore assumed that he had started with the club in its distressed state. Result — a red card and an early bath for the unfortunate player. Without wishing Spence ill, there is a small satisfaction in knowing that, just occasionally, something bad happens to somebody connected with Arsenal FC.

It was the sort of day that needed some light relief, for there was not much to be had from the weather. The first players on the course in the morning had not even completed one hole before the rain started to hose down without pity. Four hours were lost; play continued long into the evening and the second round will be completed this morning. It was not, it is safe to say, much fun.



The mud flies as Brian Davis, the joint-leader, escapes from trouble at the 10th

Gorry transforms fortunes

CONFIDENCE was not something that Simon Gorry had a great deal of going into the English Amateur championship at Woodhall Spa, but a week can be a long time in golf and today Gorry, 18, a member of the Sudbury club, takes on Mark Sanders, 23, from Bristol and Clifton, in the 36-hole final.

After missing the cut in the Carris Trophy at Whitington Heath, Gorry, a Middlesex county player, was wondering whether he should make the trip to Woodhall Spa at all. "I thought about pulling out but decided to give it a shot and then, in my first-round match against Ben Pile, I started to put really well and things have progressed from there," Gorry said.

By RICHARD CLIFFORD

In the semi-final yesterday afternoon, Gorry was one down early on to Neil Ridewood, of Orsett, but took control with a run of three successive holes from the 6th. Ridewood did manage to pull one back at the 15th, but a poor drive at the next cost him another hole and Gorry closed out the match at the 17th green by 2 and 1.

Sanders, who started the week by beating Gary Wolstenholme in the first round, booked his final place with a one hole success over Roger Smithies, a 33-year-old sales rep from Manchester.

Sanders was two-up at the turn, level by 13 and two-up with two to play, but he was

Course record sets King on her way

BETSY KING completed a round of 66, eight under par, on the opening day of the du Maurier Classic to claim a one-stroke lead at the final major in the LPGA Tour.

King, of the United States, who has won six majors in her 21-year career, led Meg Mallon, her compatriot, and Wendy Doolan, of Australia, by one stroke after setting the course record at the Essex Golf and Country Club in Ontario, Canada. Victory in the tournament would see her join Pat Bradley as the only golfer to win all four existing majors on the LPGA Tour.

Lisa Hackney, of Great Britain, was two strokes off the lead having put together a

round of 66, while Laura Davies took a 69, as did Se Ri Pak, the South Korean rookie who is trying to become the first golfer since Bradley to win three majors in the same year. Pak, 20, has four victories this year, including the US Women's Open and the LPGA Championship, and she heads the money-list in North America with \$768,211 (about £465,000). Annika Sorenstam, of Sweden, twice a winner of the US Women's Open, had a 68.

Nick Price, Paul Azinger and Russ Cochran completed rounds of 65 to share the lead after the first round of the St Jude Classic tournament in Memphis.

FOR THE RECORD

ATHLETICS

ANNIECY, France: IAAF world junior championships: 10,000m: 1998, 10:40.80 (U.S.); 15,000m: 20:30.00 (U.S.); 5,000m: 15:19.50 (U.S.); 10,000m: 32:00.00 (U.S.); 20,000m: 1:03:44.00 (U.S.); 30,000m: 1:55:00.00 (U.S.); 40,000m: 2:30:00.00 (U.S.); 50,000m: 3:10:00.00 (U.S.); 60,000m: 4:00:00.00 (U.S.); 70,000m: 4:55:00.00 (U.S.); 80,000m: 5:45:00.00 (U.S.); 90,000m: 6:35:00.00 (U.S.); 100,000m: 7:25:00.00 (U.S.); 110,000m: 8:15:00.00 (U.S.); 120,000m: 9:05:00.00 (U.S.); 130,000m: 9:55:00.00 (U.S.); 140,000m: 10:45:00.00 (U.S.); 150,000m: 11:35:00.00 (U.S.); 160,000m: 12:25:00.00 (U.S.); 170,000m: 13:15:00.00 (U.S.); 180,000m: 14:05:00.00 (U.S.); 190,000m: 14:55:00.00 (U.S.); 200,000m: 15:45:00.00 (U.S.); 210,000m: 16:35:00.00 (U.S.); 220,000m: 17:25:00.00 (U.S.); 230,000m: 18:15:00.00 (U.S.); 240,000m: 19:05:00.00 (U.S.); 250,000m: 19:55:00.00 (U.S.); 260,000m: 20:45:00.00 (U.S.); 270,000m: 21:35:00.00 (U.S.); 280,000m: 22:25:00.00 (U.S.); 290,000m: 23:15:00.00 (U.S.); 300,000m: 24:05:00.00 (U.S.); 310,000m: 24:55:00.00 (U.S.); 320,000m: 25:45:00.00 (U.S.); 330,000m: 26:35:00.00 (U.S.); 340,000m: 27:25:00.00 (U.S.); 350,000m: 28:15:00.00 (U.S.); 360,000m: 29:05:00.00 (U.S.); 370,000m: 29:55:00.00 (U.S.); 380,000m: 30:45:00.00 (U.S.); 390,000m: 31:35:00.00 (U.S.); 400,000m: 32:25:00.00 (U.S.); 410,000m: 33:15:00.00 (U.S.); 420,000m: 34:05:00.00 (U.S.); 430,000m: 34:55:00.00 (U.S.); 440,000m: 35:45:00.00 (U.S.); 450,000m: 36:35:00.00 (U.S.); 460,000m: 37:25:00.00 (U.S.); 470,000m: 38:15:00.00 (U.S.); 480,000m: 39:05:00.00 (U.S.); 490,000m: 39:55:00.00 (U.S.); 500,000m: 40:45:00.00 (U.S.); 510,000m: 41:35:00.00 (U.S.); 520,000m: 42:25:00.00 (U.S.); 530,000m: 43:15:00.00 (U.S.); 540,000m: 44:05:00.00 (U.S.); 550,000m: 44:55:00.00 (U.S.); 560,000m: 45:45:00.00 (U.S.); 570,000m: 46:35:00.00 (U.S.); 580,000m: 47:25:00.00 (U.S.); 590,000m: 48:15:00.00 (U.S.); 600,000m: 49:05:00.00 (U.S.); 610,000m: 49:55:00.00 (U.S.); 620,000m: 50:45:00.00 (U.S.); 630,000m: 51:35:00.00 (U.S.); 640,000m: 52:25:00.00 (U.S.); 650,000m: 53:15:00.00 (U.S.); 660,000m: 54:05:00.00 (U.S.); 670,000m: 54:55:00.00 (U.S.); 680,000m: 55:45:00.00 (U.S.); 690,000m: 56:35:00.00 (U.S.); 700,000m: 57:25:00.00 (U.S.); 710,000m: 58:15:00.00 (U.S.); 720,000m: 59:05:00.00 (U.S.); 730,000m: 59:55:00.00 (U.S.); 740,000m: 60:45:00.00 (U.S.); 750,000m: 61:35:00.00 (U.S.); 760,000m: 62:25:00.00 (U.S.); 770,000m: 63:15:00.00 (U.S.); 780,000m: 64:05:00.00 (U.S.); 790,000m: 64:55:00.00 (U.S.); 800,000m: 65:45:00.00 (U.S.); 810,000m: 66:35:00.00 (U.S.); 820,000m: 67:25:00.00 (U.S.); 830,000m: 68:15:00.00 (U.S.); 840,000m: 69:05:00.00 (U.S.); 850,000m: 69:55:00.00 (U.S.); 860,000m: 70:45:00.00 (U.S.); 870,000m: 71:35:00.00 (U.S.); 880,000m: 72:25:00.00 (U.S.); 890,000m: 73:15:00.00 (U.S.); 900,000m: 74:05:00.00 (U.S.); 910,000m: 74:55:00.00 (U.S.); 920,000m: 75:45:00.00 (U.S.); 930,000m: 76:35:00.00 (U.S.); 940,000m: 77:25:00.00 (U.S.); 950,000m: 78:15:00.00 (U.S.); 960,000m: 79:05:00.00 (U.S.); 970,000m: 79:55:00.00 (U.S.); 980,000m: 80:45:00.00 (U.S.); 990,000m: 81:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,000,000m: 82:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,010,000m: 83:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,020,000m: 84:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,030,000m: 84:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,040,000m: 85:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,050,000m: 86:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,060,000m: 87:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,070,000m: 88:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,080,000m: 89:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,090,000m: 89:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,100,000m: 90:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,110,000m: 91:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,120,000m: 92:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,130,000m: 93:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,140,000m: 94:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,150,000m: 94:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,160,000m: 95:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,170,000m: 96:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,180,000m: 97:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,190,000m: 98:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,200,000m: 99:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,210,000m: 99:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,220,000m: 100:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,230,000m: 101:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,240,000m: 102:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,250,000m: 103:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,260,000m: 104:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,270,000m: 104:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,280,000m: 105:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,290,000m: 106:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,300,000m: 107:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,310,000m: 108:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,320,000m: 109:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,330,000m: 109:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,340,000m: 110:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,350,000m: 111:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,360,000m: 112:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,370,000m: 113:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,380,000m: 114:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,390,000m: 114:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,400,000m: 115:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,410,000m: 116:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,420,000m: 117:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,430,000m: 118:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,440,000m: 119:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,450,000m: 119:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,460,000m: 120:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,470,000m: 121:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,480,000m: 122:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,490,000m: 123:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,500,000m: 124:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,510,000m: 124:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,520,000m: 125:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,530,000m: 126:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,540,000m: 127:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,550,000m: 128:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,560,000m: 129:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,570,000m: 129:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,580,000m: 130:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,590,000m: 131:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,600,000m: 132:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,610,000m: 133:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,620,000m: 134:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,630,000m: 134:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,640,000m: 135:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,650,000m: 136:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,660,000m: 137:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,670,000m: 138:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,680,000m: 139:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,690,000m: 139:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,700,000m: 140:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,710,000m: 141:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,720,000m: 142:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,730,000m: 143:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,740,000m: 144:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,750,000m: 144:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,760,000m: 145:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,770,000m: 146:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,780,000m: 147:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,790,000m: 148:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,800,000m: 149:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,810,000m: 149:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,820,000m: 150:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,830,000m: 151:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,840,000m: 152:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,850,000m: 153:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,860,000m: 154:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,870,000m: 154:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,880,000m: 155:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,890,000m: 156:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,900,000m: 157:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,910,000m: 158:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,920,000m: 159:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,930,000m: 159:55:00.00 (U.S.); 1,940,000m: 160:45:00.00 (U.S.); 1,950,000m: 161:35:00.00 (U.S.); 1,960,000m: 162:25:00.00 (U.S.); 1,970,000m: 163:15:00.00 (U.S.); 1,980,000m: 164:05:00.00 (U.S.); 1,990,000m: 164:55:00.00 (U.S.); 2,000,000m: 165:45:00.00 (U.S.); 2,010,000m: 166:35:00.00 (U.S.); 2,020,000m: 167:25:00.00 (U.S.); 2,030,000m

Kevin Eason takes a detour into the Formula One rumour mill Hill happy to remain with Jordan

DAMON HILL is ready to end weeks of speculation about his future by pledging himself to Jordan for a second year. The 1996 world champion has been linked with a return to Williams or a move to British American Racing (BAR), despite a tormented season in which he has so far failed to win a point.



Hill: wretched season

Hill said yesterday that he was "more than likely" to stay at Jordan, a team that has gone eight years without a victory. "The team has done well to keep a foothold through a difficult season, but I can see improvement all around me at the moment," he said.

The Jordan team has been one of the unhappiest in Formula One this year. Hill has been disappointed with the performance of his car while Eddie Jordan, the team owner, is anxious for a return on his annual investment of £4.5 million in one of the sport's most experienced drivers.

THE RACE FOR THE DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

Driver	Points	Wins	Podiums	Poles	Fast Laps	Retirements
1. Michael Schumacher	66	10	10	6	10	0
2. Damon Hill	58	4	10	8	4	0
3. David Coulthard	36	6	6	1	10	10
4. Eddie Irvine	32	3	4	4	4	4
5. Wurz	17	3	3	3	3	2
6. Fisichella	15	1	1	1	6	6
7. Villeneuve	12	2	1	1	2	3
8. Frentzen	8	4	2	2	2	1
9. Barrichello	4	2	1	2	2	0
10. Alesi	3	2	1	1	1	0
11. Salo	3	1	1	1	1	0
12. R. Schumacher	3	1	1	1	1	0
13. Herbert	1	1	1	1	1	0
14. Di Gregorio	1	1	1	1	1	0
15. Magnussen	1	1	1	1	1	0

while teams strengthen their bargaining positions and inject a little tension into negotiations by dropping hints that they are on the lookout for new faces.

The Ferrari pairing of Michael Schumacher and Eddie Irvine remains intact. Alexander Wurz and Giancarlo Fisichella, the Benetton pair, are on long-term deals, but these are the only safe drivers.

The only pressure I have is to keep winning, which is much better than the past few years, when I had to ensure I kept my drive and also had to deal with the criticism that came from just about everywhere," the Finn said.

Frentzen, who is likely to be replaced by Alex Zanardi, the American CART champion. Negotiations are understood to be well advanced for a return to Formula One for the man rejected by the sport just four years ago.



Michael Schumacher speeds round the Hockenheim circuit in his Ferrari during practice yesterday, but was still left trailing by the McLarens. Photograph: Mark Thompson/Allsport

Schumacher is upstaged despite home advantage

ALMOST a year has passed since the name Hill has appeared at the top of a Formula One timesheet, but there was a fleeting moment of glory yesterday for Britain's former world champion.

After the opening practice session for the German Grand Prix tomorrow, there behind the customary line-up of the McLaren-Mercedes of Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard was Damon Hill, just 0.03sec off the pace of the two fastest cars on the circuit.

FROM KEVIN EASON IN HOCKENHEIM
speed of 222.5mph, which is thought to be a record for a non-turbo-charged Formula One car.

DETAILS FROM HOCKENHEIM
PRACTICE TIMES: 1. M. Hill (Fin, McLaren-Mercedes) 1:44.294; 2. D. Coulthard (GB, McLaren-Mercedes) 1:44.138; 3. D. Hill (GB, Jordan-Mugen Honda) 1:44.294; 4. J. Alesi (Fr, Sauber-Petronas) 1:44.548; 5. M. Schumacher (Ger, Ferrari) 1:44.757; 6. E. Irvine (GB, Ferrari) 1:44.780; 7. J. Villeneuve (Can, Williams-Mecachrome) 1:44.828; 8. H. Frentzen (Ger, Williams-Mecachrome) 1:45.188; 9. J. Herbert (GB, Sauber-Petronas) 1:45.256; 10. R. Schumacher (Ger, Jordan-Mugen Honda) 1:45.511; 11. J. Trulli (It, Prost-Peugeot) 1:45.611; 12. A. Wurz (Austria, Benetton-Payroll) 1:45.943; 13. G. Fisichella (It, Benetton-Payroll) 1:46.002; 14. M. Salo (Fin, Arrows-Yamaha) 1:46.183; 15. R. Barrichello (Br, Stewart-Ford) 1:46.227; 16. D. Padoa-Schioppa (Ital, Stewart-Ford) 1:46.484; 17. J. Takagi (Japan, Tyrrell-Ford) 1:46.743; 18. P. Diniz (Br, Arrows-Yamaha) 1:46.823; 19. J. Verstappen (Hol, Stewart-Ford) 1:47.008; 20. E. Turoso (Arg, Minardi-Ford) 1:48.175; 21. S. Nakano (Jpn, Minardi-Ford) 1:48.632; 22. R. Rosset (Br, Tyrrell-Ford) 1:48.986.

opportunity," Coulthard said. The challenge from Ferrari was strangely muted, especially as Michael Schumacher is on his home track.

did not have to work hard on tyres here, so we will be looking for a good race on Sunday.

DRUGS IN SPORT

French lab faced with drug-testing backlog

SUBSTANCES found in a car carrying members of the Chinese team to the world junior athletics championships in Anzhu will take 15 days to analyse because the French laboratory concerned with the testing of suspicious substances is overwhelmed with work relating to the Tour de France.

POLO

Kent strikes to earn success for Tigers

FLYING Tigers beat Windward 9-6 in the final of the high-goal Cowdroy Park Challenge Cup at Midhurst, Sussex, yesterday (John Watson writes). The Tigers, who are put together by Alex Dann and who defeated the much-fancied Metropolitan squad in the quarter-finals, were too strong for Adrian Kirby's side.

HOCKEY

Atwell falls victim to Clifton player-power

CLIFTON have parted company with Pete Atwell, their coach, despite completing the most successful season in the club's history, in which they lifted the EHA Cup, their first leading domestic trophy, and finished runners-up to Slough in the women's National League premier division (Cathy Harris writes).

DRUGS IN SPORT

Kent strikes to earn success for Tigers

Each side had an aggregate team handicap of 18 for this five-chukka encounter, with Windward displaying a somewhat better balanced line-up, but the Tigers gave the impression of having the stronger partnership from the first throw-in. Alan Kent and Andrew Hine, with Pablo Jaureche, their Brazilian

HOCKEY

Atwell falls victim to Clifton player-power

in the end we had to respect the players' wishes." Atwell has been replaced by David Ward, who steered Robinsons to the men's West League championship, but failed to guide the club into the National League in the playoffs. Miller said: "I think talking on Clifton in the women's Premiership is just the sort of challenge that Ward will enjoy rising to and we're looking forward to working with him."

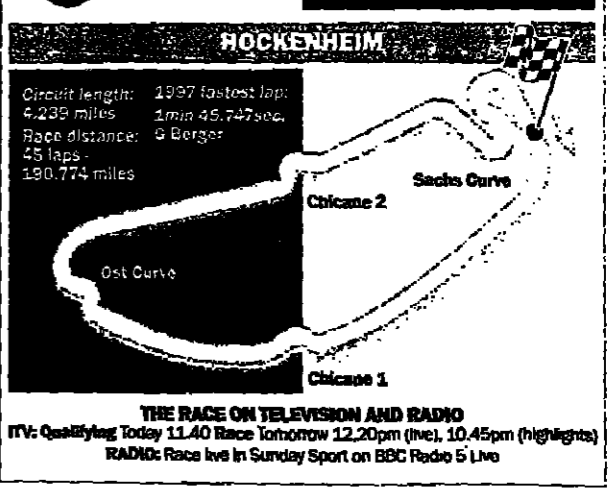
DRUGS IN SPORT

French lab faced with drug-testing backlog

Le Dauphiné Libéré, the French newspaper, reported that three members of the Chinese delegation were questioned throughout Thursday by customs authorities after the find on Saturday, July 25. The car had been stopped by French border police as it crossed the Switzerland-France frontier, travelling from Geneva airport. The

GRAND PRIX 1998: HOW THEY STAND FOR GERMANY

WEST McLAREN MERCEDES Position: 2 Points: 102	8. Mika Hakkinen Position: 1 Points: 66 1998 best: 1
7. David Coulthard Position: 3 Points: 36 1998 best: 1	4. Eddie Irvine Position: 4 Points: 32 1998 best: 2
SCUDERIA FERRARI MARLBORO Position: 2 Points: 90	3. Michael Schumacher Position: 2 Points: 66 1998 best: 1
BENETTON FORMULA ONE Position: 3 Points: 32	5. Giancarlo Fisichella Position: 6 Points: 15 1998 best: 2
WINFIELD WILLIAMS Position: 4 Points: 20	2. Heinz-Harald Frentzen Position: 8 Points: 8 1998 best: 3
STEWART FORD Position: 5 Points: 5	18. Rubens Barrichello Position: 9 Points: 4 1998 best: 5
SAUBER PETRONAS Position: 6 Points: 4	14. Johnny Herbert Position: 13 Points: 1 1998 best: 6
DANKA ARROWS Position: 6 Points: 4	16. Pedro Diniz Position: 13 Points: 1 1998 best: 6
JORDAN MUGEN HONDA Position: 8 Points: 3	9. Damon Hill Position: 7 Points: 58 1998 best: 7
PROST PEUGEOT Position: 9 Points: 1	11. Olivier Panis Position: 15 Points: 0 1998 best: 9
TYRRELL FORD Position: 10 Points: 0	20. Toranosuke Takagi Position: 19 Points: 0 1998 best: 11
MINARDI TEAM Position: 11 Points: 0	22. Shinji Nakano Position: 22 Points: 0 1998 best: 7



THE RACE ON TELEVISION AND RADIO
TV: Qualifying Today 11.40 Race Tomorrow 12.20pm (Tue), 10.45pm (Wed)
RADIO: Race live in Sunday Sport on BBC Radio 5 Live

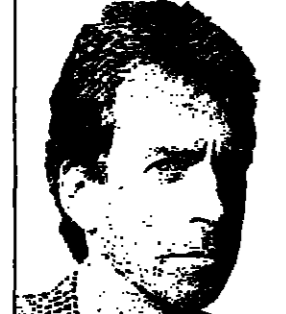
England's heartbeat bringing a nation back to life

Darren Gough has been absent too often, but he is back and approaching his best

Cricket lifted its head from the pillow this week and forced a smile. It was a heartening but deceptive sign of life, remission rather than cure. The public response to success at Trent Bridge was stirring, but unless England can win again, the surge will be as fleeting as that which shakes the electricity grid when ten million kettles are switched on after *EastEnders*.

In the circumstances, then, nothing could be more appropriate than a deciding Test match at Headingley, where great deeds abound, and nothing would be more opportune than a telling performance from the most popular of English cricketers, a Yorkshireman broad and proud.

ALAN LEE



Headingley has not, to date, matched Gough's naive expectations. Of his three Tests there, two have ended in heavy defeats and one a dull draw. "Everyone always thinks the ball will go all over the place, but it's a bit of a myth. I've not yet played in a Test there when that has happened. Against South Africa in '94, both sides made well over 400 and, last year, Australia got 500."



"I like to think I brought more openness into the dressing-room. It's a different place now. All the lads take the mickey out of me but I love it." Photograph: Sean Paget

That Gough can speak so candidly is evidence of a change in him. Maturity may be stretching a point, for the delight of Gough is his boyish innocence. He remains a prankster from the pages of *Beano*, an escapist who admits his greatest relaxation comes on pre-Test days "when I sit in a cinema with a Diet Coke and a box of popcorn". But he is a more worldly cricketer now, capable of filtering the good advice from the bad.

He grew up in Barnsley, playing in the street and the park as kids used to do, spending his schooldays at Priory Comprehensive day-dreaming of winning goals and heroic hundreds. "I didn't concentrate much at school, but I was lucky in two ways. They let me play plenty of sport and I had parents who gave up all their time to take me to the games."

He had trials for Rotherham United, but, at 16, crickets had taken him over. He was, however, a player not a watcher and, remarkably, had never been to Headingley before Yorkshire signed him. He recalls being shy "for about two days" before his natural self-confidence took over.

He did, of course, start his Test comeback at Edgbaston, after almost a year out with hamstring trouble, but it ended in tears, literally, when Allan Donald broke his finger. "I never mind bowling short at Donald because I know I'll get it back. When I go in, they're trying to hurt me, trying to break my fingers. They were pleased as punch at Edgbaston. When I went off to hospital, I could hear them in the showers. They were happy."

He takes no offence at this, seeing it instead as a mark of respect, and there is no doubt the South Africans do regard him highly. So, too, do the Australians, with whom Gough will lock horns again this winter. "I've got a reputation there," he says, "and it releases the pressure. When I play against Australia, it's comfortable, like a county game. They never bad-mouth me, they never say a word. All the other guys are getting it, but they know it would go in one ear and out the other with me."

Allan Donald is the best bowler I've ever seen and I want to be like him. I reckon I can do it

He would prefer not to dwell on his other appearance, against West Indies in June 1995. In truth, it was an embarrassment. Gladiatorial roared on to the ground, the hero of Sydney come home, he was out, hooking, for nought, and strained his back bowling his second ball.

"I wasn't fit enough," he grimaced. "I'd had a horrendous injury in Australia, a displaced fracture of my foot, and I'd rushed back because everyone wanted me to play at Headingley. It was a mistake. It's the only time in my career when things have really got on top of me."

Gough blathers on happily, in a way that would sound conceited in others but comes quite naturally from him. He has no artifice, which is why crowds love him. "I try to keep them happy," he said, voicing a philosophy embodied, in recent time, only by Tony Greig and Derek Randall among England players. "I'm an entertainer, I'm not there to stand around like a park chop."

Popularity is one thing, performance quite another and Gough is conscious that he has not yet had a significant influence on this series. Statistically, he is more aware than might seem likely and he rattles off his series figures—eight wickets at 36 apiece—before bemoaning, justifiably, his absence on the helpful pitches at Edgbaston and Lord's.

The country is willing him to stay fit for that encounter, but the immediate priority lies closer to

Meteors on trail of repeat win

THE final of the *Cricket Cup*, to be played at the Bank of England ground, Roehampton, tomorrow will be contested by two sides whose only previous encounter resulted in one of the finest matches ever played in the competition. In 1973, Rugby Meteors won the trophy by beating Old Tombridgians, the most successful of all old boys' XIs.

Headingley acts to curb hooligans

YORKSHIRE have banned spectators from taking alcohol into part of Headingley for the decisive fifth Test match between England and South Africa next week. Consultations with the police have led officials to prevent Western Terrace ticket-holders carrying their own alcoholic drinks into the ground, although the existing "four-can rule" will apply to spectators elsewhere.

Selectors swinging towards Mullally for series decider

IAN SALISBURY was surely the one England player who left Trent Bridge last Monday with a troubled mind. Joy at being part of the first home Test match win in nine games will have mingled with anxiety over a personal performance that raised all the old doubts over his aptitude for the top level.

Salisbury was not the first spin bowler to be taken apart by Hansie Cronje, the South Africa captain, and doubtless he will not be the last. It was a skilful, premeditated assault and it came off, Salisbury conceding 57 runs in nine overs in the first innings. By the end, he was looking ragged, his control dangerously undermined.

With little chance to redeem himself in the second innings, Salisbury will fear that his comeback, after two years out of Test cricket, may be over already. Reassurance should come with inclusion in the party for the series decider at Headingley, to be named tomorrow, for it is inconceivable that the selectors will callously cast aside a valuable but sensitive talent.

However, whether Salisbury makes the final XI must be open to doubt. Spin bowlers have suffered a barren summer and there is no cause to believe that the pitch at Headingley will be of any great help, even to the wrist-spin purveyed by Salisbury and Paul Adams.

Yorkshire bowlers mine a rich seam

WORCESTER (second day of four): Worcestershire, with three first-innings wickets in hand, are 310 runs behind Yorkshire.

Solanki was missed at second slip. What with that and having Moody dropped at the wicket off another hard chance, he would have finished with impressive figures indeed.



Salisbury: expensive

Mullally: in prime form

Smart and keep sur in the ascen

shows up

and Nixon recovery

Handwritten notes and signatures at the bottom right of the page.

سكول من رايصل

CRICKET

Stewart and Brown keep Surrey in the ascendant

By JACK BAILEY

THE OVAL (second day of four): Sussex, with six second-innings wickets in hand, are 180 runs behind Surrey

EVEN though Alex Tudor was nursing a damaged foot and Ian Salisbury, the England leg-spin bowler, was not called on until the 27th over of the Sussex second innings to exploit a pitch that was taking spin, Surrey continued to have the better of the exchanges by a considerable margin.

Scores in the nineties by Alec Stewart and Alistair Brown were the pillars on which a first-innings lead of 239 runs was built and another spell of sharp bowling with the new ball by Martin Bicknell saw Sussex lose their first two wickets for 17 runs, with visions of a two-day defeat just possible. They survived the day largely thanks to watchful batting by Chris Adams and Toby Peirce, but short of Houdini coming in to bat at No 7 or No 8, the writing on the wall is not in their favour and they look likely to succumb to a heavy defeat.

The shape of things to come was apparent early in the day's play. One team was on the top of its form, with Alec Stewart, all guns blazing, leading the way for Surrey; the other, rather like a hopeful young colt, was far from confident, hoping that things would somehow come right for them, but with no great show of confidence in the eventual outcome.

In this sort of form, Stewart is irresistible. You could only hope he was saving something for the deciding Test match at Headingley next week as he

moved through his repertoire, leaving Adam Hoolioake a close second in their partnership of 69, but second nonetheless. It was no fun for Sussex to see Brown marching in, even less fun for them when he hoisted Bates over long on for a vast six soon after he appeared on the scene with Surrey already 43 runs in the lead.

Stewart's century seemed assured when, in attempting to work a straight ball to leg that kept low, he was leg-before. He had hit 14 fours and had faced 160 balls while moving to 96. His dismissal signalled a passage of some hope for Sussex, for while Brown continued on his merry

way, the other end was far from secure. Both Ben Hoolioake and Barty fell to the off-spin of Bates, Barty unlucky to be taken low and wide by Bevan's brilliant slip catch.

Surrey had lost three quick wickets while only seven runs were scored and, at 193 for six, were looking vulnerable for the first time since Thursday morning. Then Bicknell joined Brown, who was now well into his stride, and while Surrey prospered, Sussex showed signs of wear and tear.

Brown had reached 65 when he was dropped at long off. Bevan was the bowler. His mixture of long-hops and full-tosses proved unusually effective in keeping down the runs, but apart from this one chance, he posed little threat as Brown and Bicknell put on 115 for the seventh wicket. Brown moved within sight of his fourth century of the season and Surrey extended their lead to 183 before Bicknell was yorked. Although Brown holed out to mid on, having hit a six and 13 fours in his 94, Saqlain, who was dropped twice, and his fellow tail-enders saw Surrey to maximum batting points and a lead of 239. The only question now seemed to revolve around how long it would take them to polish off Sussex, for whom Bates had taken five well-deserved wickets on a pitch on which spin remained king. Saqlain, the first-innings destroyer, did not strike until his eleventh over, but then he had Peirce and Bevan both taken in the slips and he continued to ask many difficult questions right to the close of play.

SCOREBOARD

Table with 3 columns: Team, Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes sections for Surrey, Sussex, and Fall of Wickets.



Brown, watched by Humphries, the Sussex wicketkeeper, drives another four during his innings of 94

Liebenberg pleads for retention

By BARNEY SPENDER

CHELMSFORD (first day of three): Essex won toss; Essex, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 393 runs behind the South Africans

ON A perfect pitch and against a below-strength Essex attack, Gerhardus Liebenberg effectively secured his place as Gary Kirsten's opening partner in the fifth Test match at Headingley next week with a solid innings of 96 yesterday as he shared a second-wicket partnership of 217 with Daryll Cullinan.

With only 32 runs from his four innings in the series, Liebenberg's place for Leeds had been in serious doubt. Adam Bacher may have gone home, but Mike Rindell, his replacement, made an impressive half-century in the one

day game here on Wednesday and there has also been talk of Brian McMillan going in first. In the event, McMillan, coming in at No 4, could only scratch his way to 29 before padding up to Danny Wilson and Rindell did not even get a game.

Liebenberg, seizing his chance, returned to being the solid, dependable opener who has now picked up 569 runs against the counties at an average of more than 70. With Peter Pollock, the convenor of selectors, on the ground, it was a timely knock. Whether it will improve his chances against Dominic Cork, Darren Gough and Angus Fraser remains to be seen. After all, his last special

performance at Trent Bridge came on the back of innings of 85, 104 not out and 47. He began quietly as Kirsten rattled along to 43 from 48 balls before Ronnie Irani, in his first over, sent his off stump flying. Cullinan survived a slip chance to Paul Grayson, captaining Essex for the first time, before he had scored, but quickly settled, relishing an attack that, with the exception of Mark Ilett, lacked any real thrust. He overtook Liebenberg in the thirties and by lunch had reached his fifty. After the interval, however, Liebenberg began to match his partner's stroke for stroke, proving particularly strong through the off side. When

Weston shows up Kent failings

DERBY (second day of four): Kent won toss; Derbyshire, with five first-innings wickets in hand, are six runs behind Kent

A LACKLUSTRE batting performance by Kent on a slow pitch left them regretting their decision to forego their familiar preference for fielding first. The wicket did test powers of timing but that did not stop Weston reaching the first half-century of the match for Derbyshire later on.

DeFreitas had exploited the uncertain Kent strokeplay to return five for 55 and Dean, a fast left-armer, took four for 52 as the innings subsided from 70 without loss to 165 all out, with seven wickets tumbling for 41 in mid-morning.

Dampness in the air was certainly a factor in the collapse but the innings became a clumsy catalogue of playing down the wrong line or, in the case of Long, not playing at all to succumb leg-before. Nevertheless Hooper, with a series of pulls and drives, appeared to be batting in entirely different conditions.

Even he perished to an indolent switch, caught down the leg side, but Fleming assumed responsibilities to sustain Kent, though losing a steady partner in Thompson, who retired hurt in unusual circumstances. Thompson tried to duck beneath what he believed was a lifting ball from Cork, only to be struck on the

Blame shifts away from Lara

EDGBASTON (second day of four): Warwickshire, with nine first-innings wickets in hand, are 239 runs behind Glamorgan

THE men in suits were still playing more shots off the field than Brian Lara was playing on it at Edgbaston yesterday. A day after Dennis Amis, the chief executive, had denied that Warwickshire were in turmoil, Bob Evans, a former chairman, delivered a scathing attack on the cricket committee which appointed Lara as captain.

Evans, the only former chairman who has not been welcomed back into the committee room since he was deposed eight years ago, believes that John Whitehouse, a former captain and now chairman

of the cricket committee, should take the blame ahead of Lara for what he called "this depressing and unacceptable season". Evans, a Birmingham solicitor, said: "It did not need a Brain of Britain to realise that Lara was likely to be both physically and mentally exhausted at the conclusion of his first season in charge of the West Indies.

Lara, meanwhile, was having another frustrating day as Tony Powell, caught by Maynard at second slip, before Knight and Wash shared an unbroken partnership of 56 to give Lara a platform to build on his paltry record of 383 runs in 17 championship innings.

Habib and Nixon lead recovery

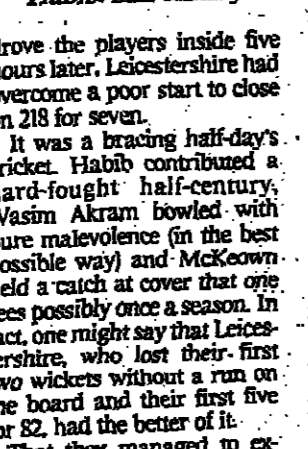
OLD TRAFFORD (second day of four): Lancashire won toss; Leicestershire have scored 218 for seven wickets against Lancashire

OF ALL the teams chasing Surrey towards the championship tape, Leicestershire have the best chance of beating them. Champions two years ago, they remain a strong and confident side and they acquired themselves well when play began at 11.00pm yesterday, after a day and a session lost to rain. By the time that he had light

tend their innings beyond 200 owed a lot to Habib and also to Nixon, who reached 42 not out and added an unbeaten 45 for the eighth wicket with Carl Crowe, a 22-year-old off-spinner, who batted with no little skill against Wasim.

It was a good toss for Lancashire to win. They omitted Keedy and played all three right-arm seamers - Martin Chapple and Aslam. Wasim found success immediately when his fourth ball hit Wells in front of all three stumps. In Martin's second over, Maddy glanced a catch that Hegge took comfortably.

Smith resisted for a while before he trod on his wicket, trying to fend off Wasim, and when Chapple was introduced at the Stretford End, Simmons, pushing forward, tickled his third ball to Hegge. It was quite conceivable that Leicestershire could be bowled out for under 100.



Habib half-century

Lancashire did not help themselves, however. Habib was missed on six by Watkinson, at third slip. Later, when Nixon was 21, he put down another chance in the same position, off Wasim. Sutcliffe played well for his 32 until he drove a return catch to Martin, who held it at the second attempt, but Nixon takes some budding and even though he lost his off stump to Wasim on 14 - it was a no ball - he stood firm on a pitch that continued to offer the bowlers assistance.

YESTERDAY'S SCOREBOARDS

Table with 3 columns: Team, Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes sections for Kent, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire, and Lancashire.

Smith puts his point to selectors

By THIRASY PETROPOULOS

ROBIN SMITH admits to being somewhat miffed at having been overlooked for the 37-man provisional World Cup squad. With a Test average of over 43, he feels that he has little to prove, but the presence here yesterday of Graham Gooch, a member of the England selection panel, elicited a response every bit as pointed as Chris Lewis's ill-chosen words.

Confident Loye hits new mark

By RICHARD HOBSON

MAL LOYE returned to Northampton after a winter in Australia with a renewed sense of purpose and perspective. Whereas last year he was unsure whether potential would ever translate into achievement, he is now collecting runs for pleasure.

Middlesex buoyed by maiden century

By JOHN THICKESSE

LORDS (first day of four): Sri Lankans won toss; Middlesex have scored 282 for eight wickets against the Sri Lankans

DAVID GOODCHILD scored a maiden hundred in only his fifth innings in first-class cricket at Lord's yesterday. Surviving a close leg-before decision on 99 and all but running out Keith Brown, his acting captain, on his hundred run, Goodchild was himself run out ten minutes later by a direct hit by Maheta Jayawardene after an innings lasting just short of six hours.

Brown was captaining Middlesex because of the late withdrawal of Mark Ramprakash with another bout of the flu bug from which he was suffering before the Trent Bridge Test last week. Angus Fraser was also left out of the Middlesex side at the request of the selectors.

Quite what persuaded Jayasuriya to put Middlesex in to bat could only be guessed at, since there was nothing either in the pitch or the touring team's new-ball bowlers that looked like setting the batsmen problems. Although, after 70 desultory minutes, Villavaranay, a skiddy medium-pace, dismissed Kettleborough and Nash in successive overs, it was no surprise when the game swung back to the batsmen until the last hour of the day.

Goodchild, a 21-year-old reminiscent of Martyn Moxon, the former England opener, should have been caught on 38, Jayasuriya dropping him in the slips. Other than that, though, he stuck to his plan of riskless occupation, a high degree of concentration and the occasional high-class stroke.

In helping Goodchild to add 89 for the third wicket, Weekes played some fine strokes too, but it was not until the arrival of Langer, the Australia left-hander, that Middlesex played with any urgency or flair. Looking to accelerate as soon as he came in, he hit three fours off his first 21 balls.

Malcontent famed for own goals

It is said that, when considering human folly, Democritus laughed and Heraclitus wept. Mind you, those upstanding gentlemen never came across Chris Lewis, whose well-honed and much-loved interpretation of the role of "Chris Lewis" continues to cheer the cricket-watching part of the nation. Has this country ever known a more contrary player?

MICHAEL HENDERSON



Just as we were getting over the many splendours of the Trent Bridge Test, along came the Leicestershire captain to tickle our ribs. Having been excluded from a group of 37 players for the forthcoming one-day internationals, to nobody's great surprise, except his own, he pronounced the selectors to be "full of shit". For once, nobody can say he knows not whereof he speaks.

Lewis evidently takes the view that there are not 37 better players in England. Shall we examine this stropky all-rounder's claim? Why not? In 12 seasons as a professional, he has never exceeded 1,000 runs in the championship and has only twice taken more than 50 wickets. In 32 Tests — 32 — he averages 23 with the bat and 37 with the ball. His best score in 53 one-day internationals is 33. As records go, his is pretty thin.

Then, there are the "incidents". This is the man who shaved his head as a fashion "statement" and found out that, in the Caribbean, the sun burns. He pulled out of a Test with a migraine and bared his beautifully sculpted buttocks in a magazine. Of course, we can't possibly forget the Great Oval Puncture two years ago, when a member of the England dressing-room watched him speaking on his mobile phone and then tell Raymond Illingworth, the team manager, that he could not report the "flair" tyre because his mobile phone wasn't working!

Last year, he made an obscene gesture to Allan Donald, that well-known trundler, in a county game at Edgbaston and found, to his shock, that the next ball was a shade quicker. He did not survive it. On the way off, he booted the pavilion gate off its hinges. The list of comic turns is endless. Clearly, this chap should be playing second house on the South Pier at Blackpool.

Lewis cannot claim to have been poorly treated. Three clubs have paid him good money and, even though he endured a horrid time at Nottinghamshire, where he missed an entire season through injury, nobody forced him to go there in the first place. Leicestershire enticed him back to Grace Road this year with the carrot of the captaincy and he has led a capable team with some success, even though they

tripped themselves up in the Benson and Hedges Cup final.

The England selectors have, in the past, been tolerant to the point of indulgence. After an inactive summer in 1995, Lewis was brought immediately back at the beginning of 1996, until his old failings became apparent. Even so, he was called up for the one-day series against South Africa in May on the flimsiest of evidence. People have gone out of their way to help him to fulfil his promise and he has repaid them with scorn.

Humility, it is clear, is not a quality that Lewis appears to hold dear. By inviting people to judge him on his record, he simply looks stupid. Are the selectors right to prefer Ealham, Fleming, Dougie Brown and Austin? Of course they are, ten times out of ten. They may have less talent, but they are excellent professionals and their peers will vouch for them as grown men, mature, responsible, of sound temperament and good character.

It is a shame that Lewis's career never took off. He looked such a likely lad at 19. He could bowl sharply, field superbly (he still does) and had a good eye for the ball. When you are tested, however, you really have to do it, against the best, which Lewis has conspicuously failed to do. Too often he did not even have a clean bill of health to play.

Talent is jolly nice, but, in cricket, as in everything else, it goes only so far. When Lewis reflects on his lack of heart, he should remember the man who captained him in the under-19 side all those years ago. This year, as Lewis decided to walk away from it all, unheralded, that man became the hero of all England.

□ Danny Baker is away



Lewis let the selectors know what he thought of them after his omission from a list of 37 players for one-day internationals

BBC should show Holmes the door

To belong to Radio 5 Live at the moment must be like being an officer in the *Grand Armée*. People throw bouquets and cheer you every step of the way. It seems the station can do no wrong and, as sport 25 hours a day is deemed just the thing to bring in more listeners, there's no lack of money for the enterprise.

Say what you like about 5 Live, and I shall, it is undeniably a success. How strange, therefore, that the producers of sports programmes are so reluctant to trust their own men. How is the Beeb going to unearth a new presenter, like Lyman, an old-fashioned trouper like Peter Jones or a maverick like Brian Johnston

when their ambition extends no further than acting as a rest home for former pros?

The Saturday phone-in last week was hosted by Rob Andrew. Rob who? On Wednesday night, Will Carling presented the main evening programme. Will what? These chaps were fine rugby players, but they didn't win any prizes for their dazzling wit or general deportment. Carling often gave the impression that dealing with the media was about as pleasant as wandering round town with a nail in his boot. Why on earth are these people doing jobs that could be done perfectly well, probably a lot better, by BBC staffers? With David Gower and

the appalling Trevor Brooking doing other shows, the tone is one of players talking to themselves. Independence of judgment is less important to the decision-makers than cosying up to "names". Wednesday's programme was called *Will Carling's World of Bowling* (no, of course I didn't hear it. I was at the Proms). When his four-week stint ends, no doubt we shall have *Great Rugby Moments with Danny La Rue and Lively Croquet* the F.S. Trueman way. You must admit, it has its attractions.

Carling and Andrew belong to the stable of sports personalities represented by Jon Holmes, agent supreme. So, too, do Gower and Gary Lineker, who feature in that grossly unfunny show *They Think It's All Over*, for which Holmes earns a credit as consultant. With the money that he rakes in, he should really consult a scriptwriter or two. Most of the material a prep school boy would disown. It's pure snut. At least Gower has the grace to look embarrassed.

Holmes, apparently, has plans for Michael Atherton when he retires as a children's television presenter (just joking). He is an able man and knows his field like no other, but wouldn't it be nice if a BBC producer said to him: "There's a lovely door over there, Jon, and you would look even nicer on the other side."

Madness and greed... here comes football

The summer has not even started, yet the football season begins today in Scotland. It never really goes away. Last week, more than 50,000 people watched Celtic play a friendly. Is there nothing else to do in Glasgow in July? Some people just can't leave the game alone for a single minute.

What a marvellous fanfare has sounded in the past few days. A chap called Unsworth signs for Aston Villa and, within a week, realises that he can't commute from Liverpool because his dinner gets cold. To suggest that he lives in Birmingham is clearly a dangerously

bright idea. So he's decided to hot-foot it back to Everton, the club he left last year in return for a whopping signing-on fee. Manchester United are ready to spend £9 million to buy Patrick Kluijvert, a young tearaway who was convicted of a driving offence two years ago. Now United want to spend a few more millions to prise Dwight Yorke, a decent though hardly world-beating striker, from Villa.

Meanwhile there are covert moves to bring a European Super League into being, with invitations likely to go out later this year to a select group. AC Milan even tried to get a wild card entry into European cup competition this season. They're jolly famous, you see, and therefore terrifically important.

Let's hear a cheer for the man who is always here

Michael Atherton resigned the England captaincy in April. He was dropped from the one-day team and began the season under a cloud. What does he make of it now?

Good times and bum times, I've known them all and, my dear, I'm still here. Blush when sometimes. Sometimes just presents and beer, and I'm here. I've been the dailies' daily fool, been called stubborn as a mule, perhaps I should have stuck to boules. Or Top Gear. I must have done something right. As I'm here. King's crown one day, Next day as common as muck, and I'm here. Century Monday, Tuesday a first-ball duck, and I'm here. I stuffed my pockets full of dust, lost the BBC correspondent's trust, in the end it was shit or bust, that was clear. I spent a week in the Lakes, and I'm here. Sydney to Fenner's, Jo'burg to Wellington Rec, and I'm here. Minded my manners when people labelled me "FSC", I'm still here. I've driven punters from the ground, Made the Pit of Hate rebound. Come on, Gussie, it's time you bought a round — Mine's a beer. Then half a dozen more, please, I'm still here. Donald and Courtney, Ambrose and Warner I've smacked, and I'm here. Was Washed and Wagged, While others' nerves cracked, (It's the fear). Sometimes I don't walk when I know I'm out. People might think I'm a dreadful lout. All I say is, let the doubters doubt: I've no ears. That's something for my memoirs. Right now, I'm here. Leg-man to fly, Who wasn't impressed by my dress (So I hear). Those stories were silly, Put about by the gutter press (Such a pair in the rear). Some said that I was past my best. That I should never play another Test. "Put the old bugger out to rest, We don't need him here." Some day I'll go quietly, But I'm still here. This game's a shocker. It offers such miserable fare. Why am I here? If I played soccer, I'd now be a millionaire, But I'm here. I've heard my name drowned out by fees, Watched while the boots burned in cheers. Forgive me if I shed no tears: Me, no fear. My record speaks for itself, And I'm here. Look who's here! Here!

— S. Sandheim/C. Rambler 1998

Well battered, Michael, Trent Bridge was simply magnificent.

Continental style will hold key to domestic success

AS WAS the case last summer, Celtic are beginning a new season with a quietly-spoken and private new manager whose reputation within the game has rarely extended to public recognition. For Wim Jansen a year ago, read Jozef Venglos. The difference is that Venglos has taken over a team of champions, while Jansen arrived with the club seeking its first title in ten seasons.

Those supporters who remain concerned about their new manager's lack of success during his only other stint in British football with Aston Villa may become edgy if Celtic fail to beat Dundermine at Parkhead today in their opening Premier League fixture. They would, though, do well to remember how last season turned out after a 2-1 home defeat by the same club early in the campaign left Celtic at the bottom of the table and Jansen apparently struggling to translate his ideas to the players.

Unlike Venglos, Dick Advocaat, Rangers' new manager, has had time to spend lavishly in an attempt to regain the championship. Advocaat, who has replaced Walter Smith, has paid £23 million for seven new players — a greater outlay than any other British club this summer.

The Dutchman, who takes his side to Edinburgh tomorrow to face Heart of Midlothian, must now mould his acquisitions into a team swiftly enough to disrupt the settled operations already in place at Celtic Park and Tynecastle.

Furthermore, he must do so without a host of Ibrox stalwarts, who were instrumental in the club's nine-year domestic reign. The past few months have seen the departures of Paul Gascoigne, Brian Laudrup, Ally McCoist, Richard Gough, Andy Goram, Stuart McCall, Ian Durrant, Alex Cleland and Joachim Bjorklund, with Marco Negri likely to join them, but such is Advocaat's pedigree and reputation for creating outstanding sides with the right balance of flair and solidity that Rangers start as clear favourites to finish top again.

At PSV Eindhoven, he not only won the Dutch title and Cup but oversaw the development of players such as Jaap Stam, Manchester United's new £10 million defender, and Phillip Cocu, a revelation for Holland in the World Cup this summer, who has just joined Barcelona. Advocaat's ability to improve good players while ensuring young talent flourishes will be particularly useful for players such as Barry Ferguson and Charlie Miller, who are aiming to stamp a Scottish mark on a cosmopolitan squad.

Rangers' opponents in the UEFA Cup second qualifying round will be PAOK Salonika, of Greece, who knocked Arsenal out of the competition last season. The draw yesterday also paired Kilmarnock with Sigma Olomouc, of the Czech Republic. Both Scottish sides will be at home in the first legs on August 11, with the return matches to be played a fortnight later.

World Cup was a joy, now for Coventry City

Chelsea fans will be pleased to hear that Marcel Desailly and I were building our understanding together yesterday afternoon. Admittedly, we were on jet-skis in St Tropez at the time, but it is better than nothing.

For the pair of us, it was the last day of holidays before work begins once more. We fly back to London this weekend to get fit for the new season and I know we will not be allowed to dwell on the memories of our World Cup triumph. Chelsea have recruited a new fitness coach from Juventus and, having spoken to Roberto di Matteo and some of the other boys, we will not be returning for a week of plicons.

On their first day back, the fitness coach had the players hooked up to heart and muscle-testing machines and if Chelsea fail this season, it will not be because of a lack of fitness. Thankfully, the rest of the team are away in Italy next week so Marcel and I should be able to ease back into things more gently after a few weeks on the beach.

As ever in English football, there will be no time to waste. In two weeks, we travel to Coventry City for our first game of the season. We lost our opening game 3-2 at Highfield Road last year, after being 2-1 up with ten minutes to go. Maybe this will be a chance to prove that we have learnt a few defensive lessons since then.



FRANK LEBOEUF

I feel I will be returning a better player 12 months on. How could it be any different after winning a World Cup this summer? I feel optimistic, not only about my own game but also about the Chelsea squad with the new recruits we have. The boys say there is a real air of professionalism

Winning is not the priority for Newcastle

THE arrival of August is traditionally the time when football enthusiasts rouse themselves from their summer slumber, replica shirts are dusted down, pulses begin to quicken and expectations rise. Thanks to an exhaustive World Cup, however, the palate of many a supporter may still be feeling just a little jaded at present.

In the case of Newcastle United, dampened ardour may be no bad thing. It was just over a year ago that Kenny Dalglish's side — runners-up in the FA Carling Premiership the season before — emerged as victors from the Irish International tournament, a pre-season kiltabout that featured PSV Eindhoven, Celtic and Derry City.

Within another ten days, Alan Shearer's snags had stuck in a sudden patch of turf at Goodison Park and Newcastle's plans for the months ahead were left in ruinous condition. As it turned out, those early victories in Dublin were significant only in terms of what might have been.

It is understandable, therefore, that Dalglish should choose to downplay the JD Sports Cup, which is taking place at the Riverside Stadium, Middlesbrough, throughout this weekend. The North East's two Premiership representatives will be joined by Benfica, who are coached by Graeme Souness, Dalglish's former Liverpool team-mate, and Empoli, the Italian Serie A side.

Do match-making. And get paid for it.

To get money back on everything you spend, call

0800 700 111

It pays you to

Subject to terms and conditions.

'Despite the well-wishers, not once have I been tempted to buy a toupee'

along the coast east of Marseilles. Around 5,000 people turned up in the main square to attend a ceremony to mark the naming of the new Frank Leboeuf garden.

And when I went on holiday to Corsica, the mayor was keen to invite me round to his house for dinner and to present me with a special medal. Everywhere, people want to give me medals, although the most important — my World Cup one — is in the safe keeping of my wife.

Stamford Bridge next season. I believe that there has been widespread speculation linking me with a move to Liverpool this week, but it has not come from me. As far as I am concerned, I have three years left on my contract at Chelsea and will see them out unless the club tells me different. I am very happy there and believe Marcel and I can be successful together. I have a World Cup medal and now I want one from the FA Carling Premiership. Chelsea must have as good a chance as any.

Gascoigne: much to prove

The rest of premiums to protect Michael Owen for £60 million could run into six figures, say The Association of British Insurers. Liverpool want to insure the 18-year-old for the huge sum, which is six times the cover they had for him last season.

It would make Owen worth more than Dennis Bergkamp, of Arsenal, and Shearer and would be a world record for a footballer.

George Caulkin

Let's hear a cheer for the man who is always here

Cornering at 140 mph calls for titanium suspension, magnesium gearbox, and nerves of steel.

VECTRA



VAUXHALL



John Cleland, Derek Warwick and their Vauxhall Vectras have got what it takes to tackle Thruxton's dreaded Church corner. Watch the fastest races in the British Touring Car Championship live on BBC Grandstand at 12.25pm and 3.40pm this Sunday.

DR

III

inning is the priority for Newcastle

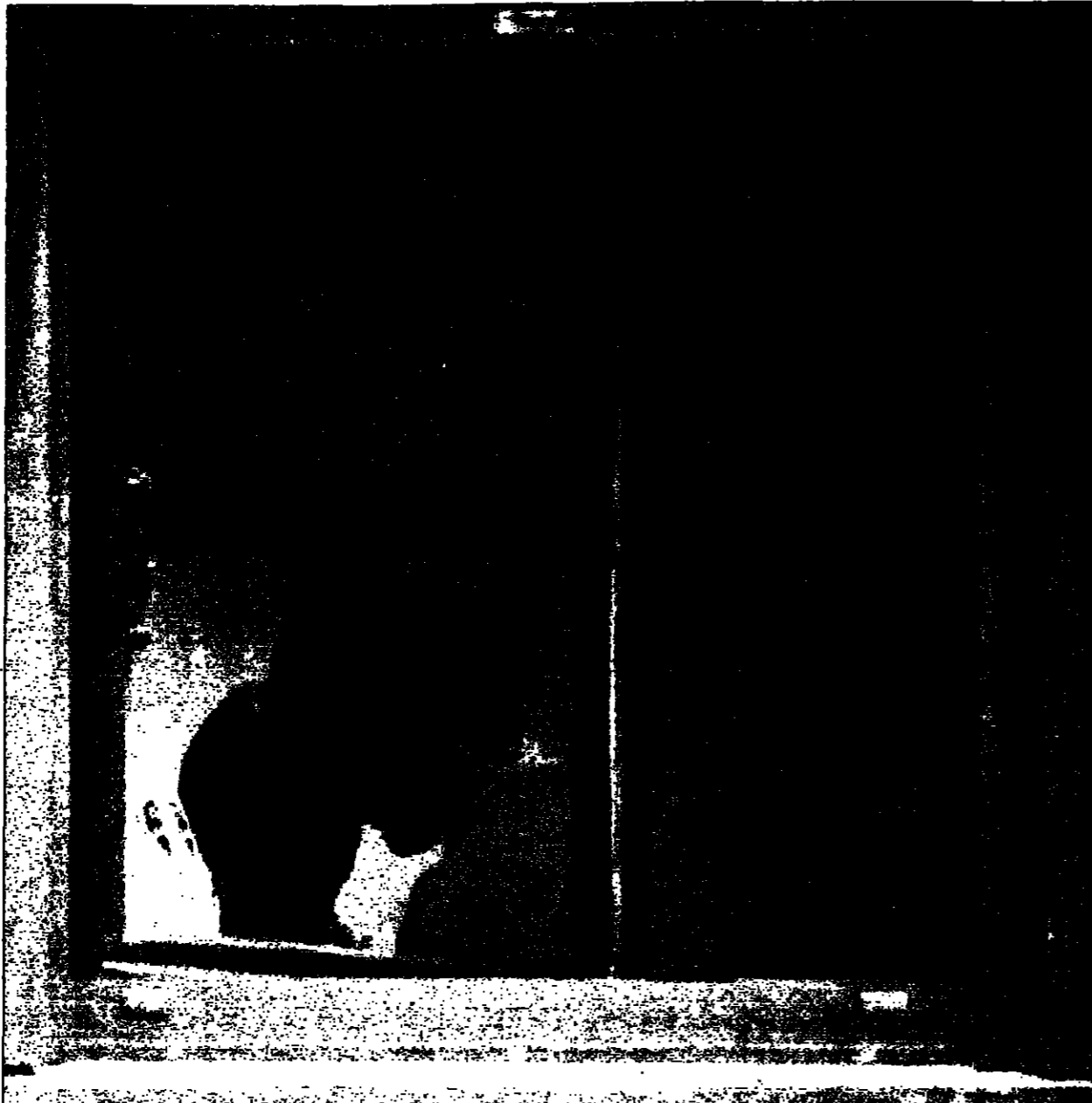


Swede's achievement is overshadowed by latest Tour scandal

Drugs charges haunt final stages

FROM JEREMY WHITTLE IN AUTUN

MAGNUS BACKSTEDT, a team-mate of Chris Boardman in the French-sponsored GAN team, became the first Swed...
Once again, however, the day's racing was overshadowed by the latest developments in the inquiry into drugs allegations.



Massi, centre, a member of the Casino team, is questioned by police in Chambéry as the drugs investigation continues



courts of justice in Lille after a hearing in front of Patrick Keil, the judge heading the drugs inquiry. Both men, who were released from custody under certain conditions yesterday, have been charged under the 1989 drug act...
Backstedt, the tallest and heaviest rider in this year's Tour, had few problems during the Pyrenean stages of the race, but admitted that he owed the win yesterday to the support of his team-mates when suffering in the steep climbs of the Alps.

Stuart O'Grady was pushing me and stayed with me if it wasn't for him, I wouldn't still be in the race today. After all the days of uncertainty, racing resumed at high speed yesterday with a break of 13 riders attacking after just 17 kilometres, as they climbed out of Switzerland and crossed the border back into France.

Backstedt, moving clear, in the uphill finishing straight, the others fought hard to hold off the giant Swede, but Backstedt, a former downhill skier, used his power and strength to secure a popular victory. At the stage start yesterday in La Chaux de Fonds, there was further controversy but little surprise as the Dutch TCM team — the subject of a long-running doping scandal that began in March, resurfaced during the Tour and has still to resolved — finally

pulled out of the race. The team's five remaining riders left the Tour yesterday morning, bringing the number of teams to have left the race this year to seven, out of a starting contingent of 21. In a further development, the Dutch government announced that it was setting up an inquiry into the way that the French authorities had handled the drugs investigation. In autumn last night, however, as Backstedt celebrated a unique success, Bjarne Riis, a

TOUR DETAILS

NINETEENTH STAGE (La Chaux de Fonds to Annemasse, 242km): 1, M Backstedt (Swe, GAN) 8hr 16min 14sec; 2, M D Beldarr (Hol, Rabobank); 3, E Mazzolari (It, Sassot); 4, P Cancellari (Fr, US Postal) all at same time; 5, F Guadaño (Fr, Française des Jeux); 6, F Sacchi (It, Polti); 7, J Durand (Fr, Cofidis); 8, A Tuzio (It, Amos); 9, S O'Grady (Aus, GAN); 10, T Guzunov (Fr, Big Mag); 11, F Andreu (US, US Postal); 12, G Agnoletti (Fr, Casino) all at 25sec; 13, T Bougignon (Fr, Big Mag) at 26; 14, R McEwen (Aus, Rabobank); 15, S Zabel (Ger, Telekom); 16, S Zanini (It, Mapei); 17, P Curren (Fr, Casino); 18, F Simon (Fr, GAN); 19, N Joubert (Fr, Cofidis); 20, A Tafi (It, Mapei) all at 16min 28sec. LEADING OVERALL POSITIONS: 1, M Pantani (It, Mercatone Uno) 67hr 58min 48sec; 2, R Juchacz (US, Colpack) at 5min 49sec; 3, J Urquhart (Ger, Telekom) 65:05; 4, C Rincero (Fr, Cofidis) 64:01; 5, B Boogard (Hol, Rabobank) 63:05; 6, J-C Robin (Fr, US Postal) 62:34; 7, R Meier (Swtz, Cofidis) 62:12; 8, D Nazzari (It, Mapei) 62:08; 9, B Fitz (Den, Telekom) 61:45; 10, G di Grande (It, Mapei) 61:13. FORTY-THREE: 1, E Zabel (Ger, Telekom) 35:05; 2, O Grady (Aus, GAN) 34:08; 3, T Steale (Bel, Mapei) 33:48; 4, McEwen (Aus, GAN) 33:36; 5, S Faust (Fr, Française des Jeux) 33:30.

former Tour-winner from the Deutsche Telekom team, found himself at the centre of yet another controversy after remarks attributed to him about the arrest of Massi appeared in the Spanish press. "I never said that Massi was dealing in dope," Riis said later. "I'm disappointed and sorry that this was written." Riis became the riders' spokesman during the chaotic scenes of Wednesday's stage, when the Tour came perilously close to being abandoned. "This police work is really necessary for the future of cycling," Riis said. "We are all agreed that we need to work for a purer sport. And I don't think that the Tour has been degraded — if you give in to pressure like that, so easily, then why bother at all in the first place?" Riis also indicated that he would be willing to act as a riders' representative when moves to agree a new structure of doping controls are discussed later this year. Last night, as the news about Massi and Terrados broke, Riis and Jan Ullrich, his team-mate and the defending champion, were preparing for the final time-trial today. It will be a hollow victory for whoever takes the prize.

RUGBY UNION

Henry aims to make Wales competitive

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

GRAHAM HENRY flew into Cardiff yesterday with the ambition to make Wales "competitive on the world stage". The New Zealander, confirmed this week as the Welsh Rugby Union's (WRU) thirtieth national coach, acknowledged, however, that this did not mean beating his own countrymen, South Africa or Australia within the next six months, which is just as well, since the Springboks are Wales's first opponents of the new season. It is only five weeks since Wales conceded the worst defeat in their history, 96-13 against South Africa in Pretoria, which drew from Henry the wry comment that his new charges could do with some improvement. But he will need time — he is on a five-year contract — patience and support if he is to achieve what the past five full-time Wales coaches, all of whom resigned or were dismissed before their time, could not.

improve and simply get better and better. That will make me very happy and I'm sure it's what the Welsh public wants. The results will come once the attitude is right.

"I understand the enormity of the challenge, but that's exactly what it is, a challenge. I accept that challenge. I just ask for people to support me and the national team in the pursuit of success."

"Though no fixture list has yet emerged for the Allied Dumbur Premiership season, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and the leading English clubs have agreed to explore a cross-border competition. The move follows the withdrawal of the eight leading French clubs from the European Cup

improve and simply get better and better. That will make me very happy and I'm sure it's what the Welsh public wants. The results will come once the attitude is right.

"I understand the enormity of the challenge, but that's exactly what it is, a challenge. I accept that challenge. I just ask for people to support me and the national team in the pursuit of success."

"Though no fixture list has yet emerged for the Allied Dumbur Premiership season, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and the leading English clubs have agreed to explore a cross-border competition. The move follows the withdrawal of the eight leading French clubs from the European Cup

improve and simply get better and better. That will make me very happy and I'm sure it's what the Welsh public wants. The results will come once the attitude is right.

"I understand the enormity of the challenge, but that's exactly what it is, a challenge. I accept that challenge. I just ask for people to support me and the national team in the pursuit of success."

"Though no fixture list has yet emerged for the Allied Dumbur Premiership season, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and the leading English clubs have agreed to explore a cross-border competition. The move follows the withdrawal of the eight leading French clubs from the European Cup

improve and simply get better and better. That will make me very happy and I'm sure it's what the Welsh public wants. The results will come once the attitude is right.

"I understand the enormity of the challenge, but that's exactly what it is, a challenge. I accept that challenge. I just ask for people to support me and the national team in the pursuit of success."

"Though no fixture list has yet emerged for the Allied Dumbur Premiership season, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and the leading English clubs have agreed to explore a cross-border competition. The move follows the withdrawal of the eight leading French clubs from the European Cup

improve and simply get better and better. That will make me very happy and I'm sure it's what the Welsh public wants. The results will come once the attitude is right.

"I understand the enormity of the challenge, but that's exactly what it is, a challenge. I accept that challenge. I just ask for people to support me and the national team in the pursuit of success."

"Though no fixture list has yet emerged for the Allied Dumbur Premiership season, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and the leading English clubs have agreed to explore a cross-border competition. The move follows the withdrawal of the eight leading French clubs from the European Cup

RUGBY LEAGUE: GOULDING FACES UNCERTAIN FUTURE AT ST HELENS

Ambitious Veivers prepares to take on the Giants' challenge

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

AFTER his first game in temporary charge of Huddersfield Giants, Phil Veivers was unequivocal about wanting the job on a permanent basis, despite his body language saying something different after the bottom side in the JJB Super League had endured a twelfth defeat in 14 matches. At Gateshead last Friday, Veivers retreated beneath his peaked cap after a dismal second-half performance, in contrast to the opening 40 minutes, when Huddersfield had Hull Sharks rattled. For all the side's limitations and the bad odour of Garry Schofield's removal as coach 12 days ago — now the subject of a legal action — Veivers wants to prove himself to be capable of the job, starting tomorrow at St Helens, where the Australian spent 12 productive years before moving to the Giants in 1996. Both clubs are in a state of upheaval. St Helens this week told Shaun McRae, their coach since January 1996, that his contract would not be renewed at the end of the season. Publicly, McRae has pledged his commitment for the remaining three months, which would rule him out of the Huddersfield position and tie in with the vacancy at the probable Gateshead franchise next year.



Goulding: keeping quiet

"Saints may be in turmoil, but there's never a good time to go there," Veivers said. "They play off-the-cuff football, which has proved successful over the years, and they need the points to stay in the top five. Obviously, I want the Huddersfield job permanently and a win wouldn't do me any harm."

Tom Ellard, the St Helens chairman, has insisted that recent events, including the suspension of Bobbie Goulding, have acted as a catalyst, but the performance tomorrow will clarify that. As well

as Wigan Warriors played in resoundingly beating them at Swansea last Sunday, St Helens looked a long way from being a cohesive team. Not wanting to prejudice any hearing into his case, Goulding prefers not to comment on the incident in the team hotel at Swansea in which he was reported for alleged abuse of a team-mate. If found guilty by the club's internal disciplinary procedure, the Great Britain scrum half might have played his last match for St Helens. Each scrape with authority is narrowing the options for Goulding, one of the club's highest-paid players. He would like a move to rugby union, but his increasingly stained image and the money that he would want could block that particular avenue.

Tommy Martyn switches from loose forward to replace Goulding at half back and Karlie Hammond steps up from the bench. Julian O'Neill is available after a back injury suffered when he fell off a ladder. So too is Vila Mataritia, after he broke his arm in January, although the Western Samoa forward blotted his comeback appearance in the reserve team on Thursday night when he was sent off. Results between Castleford

Tigers and second-placed Leeds Rhinos this year stand at one apiece. Castleford have been less impressive away from Wheldon Road, where Leeds must break their duck in the Super League era to make up ground on Wigan. Marc Gianville displaces Daryl Powell at loose forward for Leeds in his first appearance for eight weeks.

Nathan McAvoys and Neil Harmon, Bradford Bulls' mid-week signings, will line up at home against Sheffield Eagles, an important test of the champions' credibility after their poor performance in losing to London Broncos at Edinburgh two weeks ago. As St Helens and Bradford have wobbled, London are poised behind them to claim a top-five place — their incentive away at Warrington Wolves, who give late checks to two backs, Lee Penny and Tom Kohne-Love. Shane Millard, the Broncos' latest Australian recruit from South Sydney, is set to make his debut.

After McAvoys' £140,000 move to Bradford, Phil Hassan comes into the centre for the struggling Salford Reds away at Hull. He has missed the past six games with a slipped disc. Dean Busby, on the bench tomorrow, will stay at Hull, on loan from St Helens, for the rest of the season.

Advertisement for 'it's the business' corporate golf day. It includes a registration form, a list of sponsors like Citroën and GOLF MONTHLY, and a photo of a golfer. The text describes a 4-step process: 1. Register your Company Golf Day, 2. Hold your Company Golf Day, 3. Quality for the Regional Finals, and 4. Televised National Final.

A registration form for a corporate golf challenge. It asks for company name, representative name, address, telephone, and email. It also includes a section for 'Personalised Newsletter Requirements' and 'Terms and Conditions'. At the bottom, there are logos for Citroën, GOLF MONTHLY, GOLFINO, and STROKESCOVER.

Advertisement for Stuart, a Canberra Raiders player. It features a photo of Rick Stuart and text by Christopher Irvine. The text discusses Stuart's career with the Australian Rugby Union (ARU) and his decision to join Canberra Raiders. It mentions his contract, salary, and the club's interest in him.

Edward Gorman looks at the challenge Britain's biggest regatta faces to remain No 1



A crew member climbs the mast of his yacht, above, and shows the enthusiasm and passion for sailing that has become synonymous with the Cork regatta, while even the wind and good weather have deserted Coves over the past few years. Main photograph: Valerie O'Sullivan

Given all the criticism of Skandia Life Cowes Week being aired in various yacht club bars these days, you could be forgiven for thinking that Britain's biggest and longest-running regatta, which begins on the Solent today, is in crisis.

Cowes fights against a tide of discontent

In fact, though numbers are down on last year — around 800 crews are racing over the next eight days compared with 920 in 1997 — Cowes will still put on a regatta unrivalled in its scope anywhere else in the world.

The old ingredients, the tricky test of Solent winds and tides, the ageless elegance of the dayboat classes and the shoreside mix of upmarket yacht clubs and the main marina bar will once again combine to provide nearly 10,000 yachtsmen and their families with one of their most enjoyable weeks of the year.

Yet behind it all, the stormclouds have been gathering and the regatta this year takes place against a backdrop of increasing dissatisfaction and criticism from not only the sailors, but also the event's main sponsor. At its heart lies the basic dilemma for anyone involved in running what — like Henley, Ascot or Wimbledon — has become not just a sporting or recreational event, but part of the national heritage.

Nicholson remains cautious about introducing a professional class, however. "I can see the attraction, but Cowes Week is really for the great mass of ordinary sailors — the real enthusiasts who turn up year after year in their Sunbeams, X-Boats or Victorias."

Shoreside development at Cowes is the province of the Isle of Wight council and the various business groups associated with the regatta. Cowes needs more toilet facilities, a bigger water taxi service, more dinghy pontoons and more hotels and restaurants.

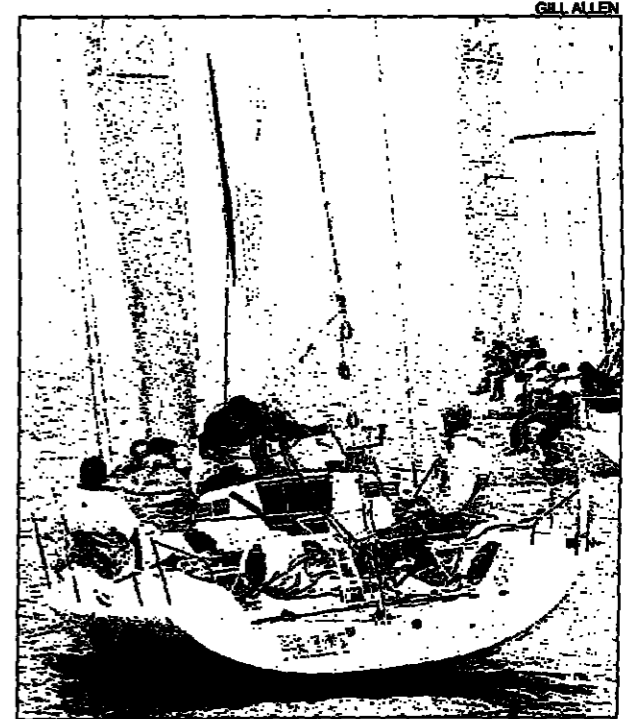
Yet behind it all, the stormclouds have been gathering and the regatta this year takes place against a backdrop of increasing dissatisfaction and criticism from not only the sailors, but also the event's main sponsor. At its heart lies the basic dilemma for anyone involved in running what — like Henley, Ascot or Wimbledon — has become not just a sporting or recreational event, but part of the national heritage. Namely, to what degree dare you modernise, develop or change a tried and trusted recipe, without damaging the very traditions and ethos that has made Cowes the nautical classic that it is?

At Crosshaven is the only host club and the entire event is confined within a single, well laid-out tented village, giving the five-day regatta a well-organised feel and an exciting intensity that yachtsmen enjoy. At Cowes, by contrast, the shoreside is broken up between the various yacht clubs and the marinas and running the regatta is a tricky balancing act with vested interests, tradition, politics and local geography all to be taken into account.

He dismisses, too, the generally accepted view that the CCC is against change and innovation. "We are very open-minded," Nicholson said. "We recognise that we can't stand still — anything that stands still stagnates. On the other hand, we must be careful we don't spoil an event which gives a huge amount of pleasure to a very large number of sailors."

He is confident that there will be further investment in new technology to help with race management and he is interested in looking at ways of developing space ashore that will allow more competitors to get together in one place after racing to give the regatta a more centralised feel.

At Cowes Yacht Haven, Chris Troop, a deputy mayor on Cowes town council, who runs the main bar at the regatta, is aware of the need for change, but, like many, he is determined not to be rushed. "What annoys me is people who make criticisms and suggestions as if we'd never thought of any of these things ourselves. This is not an easy event to move forward because of the nature of it," he said.



Flexibility provides key for beating the weather

SKANDIA LIFE Cowes Week should see a more flexible racing programme this year, one better able to cope with unsuitable weather conditions, especially winless mornings when racing has to wait for the sea breeze to appear in the afternoon.

By Edward Gorman, Sailing Correspondent. helping to ensure that all 800 boats get away in time. This year, there should again be good racing in Class 1, with a fleet of 23 boats turning out, including many that enjoyed a competitive Channel Handicap class at Ford Cork Week in mid-July.

In the one-design fleets, this is a special year for the Alfred Westmacott-designed Solent Sunbeams, which are celebrating their 75th anniversary. The regular Itchenor-based contingent are being joined by up to six boats from Falmouth to make one of the biggest Sunbeam fleets at Cowes for many years.

Rafter relishes his painless advance

PATRICK RAFTER underlined his recovery from a series of nagging injuries by beating Martin Damm 6-3, 5-7, 6-1 to advance to the quarter-finals of the Mercedes-Benz Cup in Los Angeles. The Australian believes that he will be fit enough to defend his US Open title in five weeks' time.

Vincent Spadea, the No 8 seed, retired with exhaustion when trailing 6-3, 3-0. Andre Agassi, the No 5 seed, also advanced to the quarter-finals, beating Jan-Michael Gambill 6-4, 6-4. Agassi, who was beaten by Gambill in March, said: "Nobody beats you twice in a row. You beat yourself. The last time we played, I didn't execute and he took over."

THE FIFTH FLOOR AT HARRODS IS CURRENTLY UNDER THREE FEET OF WATER SPORTS EQUIPMENT.

If you have an appetite for water sports, the Fifth Floor at Harrods is the place to whet it. Inside the Ski and Surf Department you will discover a sea of equipment, from snorkels and diving masks to wet suits and water-skis. And for when you're back on dry land, there's a wide range of T-shirts, sweatshirts and shorts by labels such as Armani, Quiksilver, O'Neill, Oxbow and Chiemsee. So visit Harrods, you'll find everything you could possibly want for water sports. Just add water.

Harrods
Harrods Ltd, Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7XL. Tel: 0171-730 1234.

prepares challenge

ration feeler



For your company golf day



it's the business

4 steps to La Manga.....

1 Register your Company Golf Day



Register your company golf day with The Times MeesPierson Corporate Golf Challenge, and compete with over 1,000 other companies for a place in the 1998 Final at the La Manga Club Resort in Spain.

2 Hold your Company Golf Day



A one off entry fee of £175 plus VAT. At least one in three chance that the qualifiers from your company golf day could go forward to represent your company in one of the fourteen Regional Finals held in October. The winners of the

3 Qualify for the Regional Finals



Regional Finals will qualify to play in the National Final in La Manga in November, to be shown on Sky Sports.

4 Televised National Final



For further information and registration details call the **Challenge Hotline**
0171 405 7273
or Faxback 0660 600 667
Calls cost 49p per minute
or visit our **GOLF TODAY** Internet site
<http://www.golftoday.co.uk/timescorp/golf/index.htm>

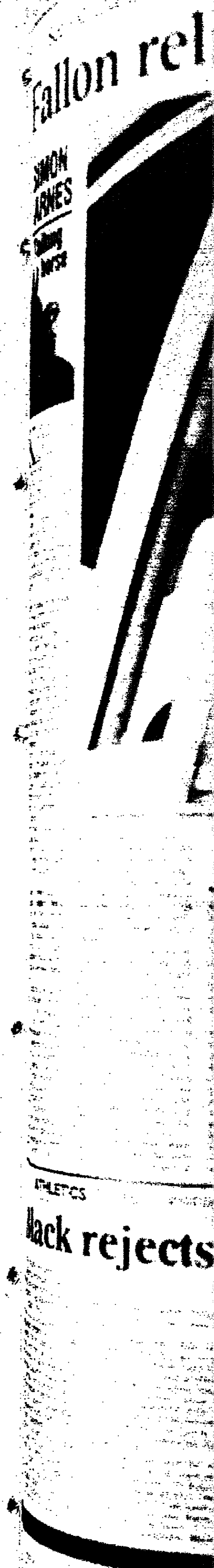
ASSOCIATE SPONSORS



TITLE SPONSOR



OFFICIAL SUPPLIERS



Handwritten signatures and scribbles at the bottom right corner.

صحة ابن زيميل

Second chance has made hard man of racing industry a favourite on the betting-shop floor

Fallon relishes another day at the office

SIMON BARNES
Talking horse

Kieren Fallon has a reputation for being a hard man. It doesn't seem to lose him many rides. If you want a softy for your jockey, you might as well hire yourself a surgeon who faints at the sight of blood.

Frankie Dettori is the charming one, the stylish one, the gabby one. Dettori is the one the public and the media love. Fallon is the one they love on the shop-floor of the racing industry — in the betting-shops.

There, in those secret places off the High Street, where you can run out of money but you can never run out of Bicos — it is easy to spot a betting-shop punter by his artless use of the special little pens that they hand out to encourage free expression on the betting slips. They spend their time seeking for certainties in a game to which human and horse contribute the least certain parts of themselves.

If there is anything approaching a certainty, a betting shop punter will love it and cherish it — and Fallon is the nearest thing to a certainty in racing. Not guaranteed to win, of course, but a cast-iron certainty to ride his guts out in a thousand-quad seller in a night meeting or his tenth ride of the day and it's the fourth leg of your 50p Yankee.



Fallon, pictured at Goodwood this week, has recovered from his failure with Bosra Sham in the Eclipse last year to establish a reputation for giving his all in every race. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

Fallon gives his all every time. Dettori may be the man for the great occasion, but Fallon is the jockey for all seasons. He is hard to hard in purpose, hard as only a man given a second chance in life can be.

But not hard on a horse. He has been in trouble, lots of it and some of it for shaking horses, but it is best to date Fallon from his mature period, after a life-changing trip to the United States in the winter of 1994-95. Banned for six months, acquiring a name as a turbulent, undisciplined and violent young man and all of it justified, he returned as a jockey of power and purpose.

Low to the horse, capable of getting extraordinary strength behind the horse's run, the whip is his last resort, not his first. He can make a horse run its fastest without cutting it in half. "A horse will always recover quick after I've ridden him," Fallon is very quick to make that point. "It is his pride, as a jockey of substance, these days, to make such a statement."

Jockeys are not sentimental types. Their relationships with horses are brief and usually tinged with violence. You don't have long, cosy, horsey chats with jockeys, as you do with trainers, with lads and with stud managers. Jockeys are in a world of winning and losing.

Racing is the briefest part of a horse's life — a couple of minutes, three or four times a year. The yard and the gallops, that is where they have their being. It is the same with trainers and lads. For jockeys, racing is the office.

Their job is the least important in racing and the most important. It is a matter of

6 A certainty to ride his guts out in a thousand-quad seller in a night meeting on his tenth ride of the day and it's the fourth leg of your 50p Yankee

Finishing off. A jockey does little or nothing to prepare a horse for his big moment, but at the finish, it all depends on him. He has vast responsibility and very little power. It is perhaps the most uncomfortable job in sport. In a sense, it is the jockey's job to be blamed.

Fallon knows that better than most. The public row last year over his riding of Bosra Sham in the Eclipse saw Fallon get the blame for losing a big race. It was his first season with Henry Cecil. Cecil's judgement in taking on Fallon as his stable-jockey had been widely questioned and this race — Fallon drove up a cul-de-sac and had to reverse out — was reckoned to be the last straw.

Fallon's three-word assessment of the race — it contained "I" and "up" — were sufficient. His response, a dramatic and remorseless collection of Newmarket winners, all for Cecil, confirmed the trainer in his belief in his stable jockey and Fallon in his belief in himself.

It was a second chance within a second chance and Fallon took it and soared. He rattled up a double century of winners last year and — though he will scoff at the suggestion — he is on track for a repeat. No wonder betting-shop punters love him. He will go slumming for them, at the smallest meeting at the lowliest tracks and into the deep and desperate parts of himself.

"I like to compete, I do," His life is appalling, relentless, manic, driven. Second-chance people are like that. Now 33 and after a decade spent making himself rather than making millions, he has a lot of catching-up to do. Riding out each morning in Newmarket, then to the races and, as often as not, to the races again for an evening meeting.

The living is ferocious, the appetite for winning unimpaired. His tactical skills get sharper with every race. Parly, he says, it is horse-work with the formbook, partly, it is the ability to make split-second decisions on the hoof. But more, it is his greater and increasing understanding of the pattern of things.

"You know the opposition, know the way the horses from

That is what matters to jockeys. The individual horse comes and go and they treat them with the lack of sentimentality that you would expect.

"But Stack Rock." His face softened, his mind suddenly engaged. "She was the toughest filly I ever rode." Also, one of the first really decent horses he ever rode. Results matter more than anything to a jockey. "She liked to run from the front and she gave everything and I love that. She had a great attitude, she was bomb-proof, she had not great breeding — but Jesus, she could run. I have a good feeling for any horse that tries for you, any horse that digs deep for you. A horse that gives all — and a lot of horses don't. I always like a horse

that gives all — especially if he doesn't win."

The last bit is surprising, almost shattering, but you can see what he means. Most people who have watched a horse race understand what he means, even if they have backed the all-giving second. Everyone who watches sport knows what he means: Henman against Sampras, England against Argentina, Donlad against Atherton. Honour in defeat is admirable.

Yet it is distinctly odd to find a jockey who agrees, because for a jockey winning really is the only thing. They don't bother much with the second places in the jockey's championship. Fallon, though, has done a great deal of giving his all with poor results.

He has struggled — but here's a tip: always back the person who has struggled, rather than the silver-spoon job. Always back the person to whom it matters most.

ATHLETICS: THOMAS OFFERS TO MAKE 400 METRES RACE IN SHEFFIELD AN EXHIBITION RUN

Black rejects chance of final walkover

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

IWAN THOMAS, the British record-holder, offered yesterday to let Roger Black end his career with an unchallenged victory in the 400 metres at the British Grand Prix in Sheffield tomorrow. As you would expect of the distinguished competitor he is, Black said thanks, but no thanks.

Thomas won the race at the AAA championships in Birmingham last weekend that hastened Black's retirement. Thomas securing his selection for the European championships in Budapest this month while Black, having finished fourth, had to rely on the selectors' judgment.

The panel, though, picked Black for the relay only and he was so devastated at being denied the chance to regain the European title he had won twice that he announced on Thursday that he would be making the Sheffield race his last instead of retiring at the end of the

season. This assumes, however, that a 400 metres vacancy does not arise through injury.

Black has said that he would remain on standby just in case. Till Luff, the European Athletics Association secretary, said yesterday that, provided Black's name was among the four permitted entries for each event to be submitted by the August 8 deadline, he could be included in the final three that need not be declared until two days before the first round on August 19.

Thomas said that he would be willing to let Black enjoy an exhibition run tomorrow. "If Roger wanted that, I would be all for it, because he has been great for the sport and as a friend," Thomas said. Black, though, wants a genuine race.

Mike Whittingham, Black's coach

and manager, predicted that the race would be so competitive that records could fall. "I am hoping that the British and European record might go with good weather," he said. "I am not saying who is going to do it, but it could be one of three people. I would put my money on Mark Richardson." Whittingham also manages Richardson, who missed the British record last month by 0.01sec.

"This is a serious race and nobody is going to collapse 20 metres from the line and let Roger win," Whittingham said. "He would hate that. Roger would prefer to come third in a fast time, knowing it was a cracking race, rather than first in a slow time."

Solomon Wartso, who received the discretionary place for Budapest

ahead of Black, has withdrawn from Sheffield after hurting a knee when he fell at the finish in Birmingham.

The poignancy of Black's probable farewell is expected to turn a four-figure attendance into five figures.

Wayne Coyle, the stadium's sports events manager, predicted that, to judge by the rush of inquiries after Black's announcement, between 12,000 and 15,000 spectators would attend the 18,000-capacity venue.

Not only has the Britain men's team captain been involved in selection controversy this week, so has the women's. The England selectors denied Paula Radcliffe a place at 1,500 metres in the Commonwealth Games. Though she has been named for the 5,000 metres, she had asked to double-up. The place that might have been allocated to Radcliffe was given

to Kelly Holmes, the defending Commonwealth champion, who has yet to appear this season after injury. Radcliffe, who has had an outstanding year, hopes to underline her form tomorrow, in the 3,000 metres against Sonia O'Sullivan.

In a brilliant year so far, Radcliffe finished runner-up to O'Sullivan at the world cross-country championships and has beaten Liz McColgan's British 10,000 metres record. After a month training at altitude, Radcliffe may challenge the British 3,000 metres record, which is held by Zola Budd, at Sheffield.

"I am in better shape than when I ran 30min 48sec for 10,000 metres," Radcliffe said. Given that Radcliffe's priority this summer is to win the 10,000 metres in Budapest and that O'Sullivan will be trying to stop her, the outcome tomorrow is significant.

"It gives it the edge," Radcliffe said.

GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

Today

FOOTBALL
Kia-Off 2.0 unless noted
Scottish League
Premier Division
Celtic v Dunfermline
Dundee v Aberdeen
Kilmarnock v Dundee Utd
Motherwell v St. Johnstone
Scottish League Cup
First round
Arbroath v Clydebank
Bochum v Hamilton
Clyde v Bewick
Cowdenfold v Livingston (T.4)
Dumbarton v Alloa
East Fife v Partick Thistle
Forfar v Strking
Queen of South v Inverness CT
Queen's Park v Arbroath
Ross County v Moray
Spartan v East Strking
Stirling v Arbroath
Stranraer v Alloa
JD Sports Cup
Newcastle v Ipswich (1.30)
Middlesbrough v Sheffield (4.0)
(Both at Riverside Stadium)

CRICKET
Vodafone Challenge Series
11.0, second day of three
CHELMSFORD: Essex v South Africans
11.0, second day of four
LORDS: Middlesex v Sri Lanka

Britannic Assurance county championship
11.0, third day of four, 104 overs minimum
DERBY: Derbyshire v Kent
SOUTHAMPTON: Hampshire v Durham
OLD TRAFFORD: Lancashire v Leicestershire
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Yorkshire
THE OVAL: Surrey v Sussex
EDGBASTON: Warwickshire v Glamorgan
WORCESTER: Worcestershire v Yorkshire
THIRD ONE-DAY UNDER-19 INTERNATIONAL: Chester-le-Street, England v Pakistan (11.0)
TOUR MATCHES: Landour v Army Cadet XV (2.30), Lipson v Munster (2.30)
CLUB MATCHES: Leicestershire v Nottingham (2.30)
EDGBASTON: Warwickshire v Glamorgan

RUGBY UNION
TOUR MATCHES: Landour v Army Cadet XV (2.30), Lipson v Munster (2.30)
CLUB MATCHES: Leicestershire v Nottingham (2.30)
EDGBASTON: Warwickshire v Glamorgan

OTHER SPORT
Cycling: National track championships (at Manchester, 1.30pm and 7.30pm)
GOLF: English Amateur championship (at Woodhall Spa)
MOTORCYCLING: World superbike championship (at Brands Hatch)
MOTOR RACING: Auto Trader British touring car championship (at Thruxton)
SPEDWAY: Second international match, England v Australia (at Eastbourne, 7.30)
Premier League: Stoke v Aston Villa (7.30)

Other Sport
Athletics: Grand Prix meeting (at Sheffield)
Cycling: Ecclesiastical Tour of the Cotswolds international road race (191km), Gloucester Park, 9.45am; National junior 25 mile time-trial championship (Milton, 8.30am)
MOTORCYCLING: World superbike championship (at Brands Hatch)
MOTOR RACING: Auto Trader British touring car championship (at Thruxton)
SPEDWAY: Third international match: England v Australia (at Eastbourne, 7.30)
Premier League: Glasgow v Arsenal (6.30), Newcastle v Celtic (5.30), Newport v Mill (2.30)

FORTHCOMING COMPANY GOLF DAYS

The companies listed have registered their spot for the 1998 Challenge. The top four individual scores on the day will form the company team eligible to qualify for a regional final.

Date	Company name	Venue	Players
31 JUL	BRITISH STEEL	WHITBY	26
31 JUL	FINANCIAL OPTIONS GROUP	MOTTRAM HALL HOTEL	48
31 JUL	VOCLAR VIVADENT LTD	ROTHLEY PARK	30
31 JUL	KNIGHT INSURANCE	SOUTH HERTS	24
31 JUL	PREMIER PROFILES LTD	FOREST PINES	16
31 JUL	RBS GROUP	BURHAM BEECHES	35
31 JUL	SEAFORTH TRAVEL	MURRAYSHALL	84
31 JUL	SHARE STAFF	HATFIELD LONDON COUNTRY CLUB	50
31 JUL	RECRUITMENT LTD	DRUMMOG	50
2 AUG	AGGREGATE INDUSTRIES UK LTD	T/A BARDON AGGREGATES	50
2 AUG	WILNER COE	CHESFIELD DOWNS	40
3 AUG	COMMERCIAL UNION	NORTH OXFORD	30
4 AUG	ARTHUR ANDERSEN	WOBURN	90
4 AUG	DIFS TRANSPORT LIMITED	THE BELFRY	50
4 AUG	NORTON ROSE	RICHMOND	40
4 AUG	THE NATIONAL GRID	KINGS NORTON	130
5 AUG	GALOR (UK) LTD	CLANDBOYE	48
5 AUG	COUNTRYWIDE INDEPENDENT ADVERTISERS LTD	COPT HEATH	100
5 AUG	DRAGONS HEALTH CLUB	IBLKEY	25
5 AUG	COLUMBUS	BADGEMORE PARK	16
6 AUG	GREENALLS PUBS & RESTAURANTS	THE DE WERE	112
7 AUG	CITY ELECTRICAL FACTORS LTD	ASHTON UNDER LYNE	80
7 AUG	J ROTHFIELD ASSURANCE PLC	NORTH DUNTOON	34

ASSOCIATE SPONSORS

CITROËN GOLFINSO GOLF MONTHLY

For event details you can either:

- TELEPHONE 0171 405 7273
- FAXBACK ON 0860 600684
- ACCESS THE GOLF TODAY INTERNET SITE ON www.golftoday.co.uk

go

Bill Thomas drives Renault's roofless wild thing to Paris in the rain — just to thank its creator

I've driven from England in the rain to thank your chairman for building the Renault Sport Spider...

But Renault's Spider is motoring at its purest. It takes minimalism to new extremes, lacking any sort of heating or roof...

Once into France, we left the motorway and found our way to Paris via the N-roads. Here the Spider was in its element...

The Spider has all-round double unequal-length wishbones with racing-car-style horizontal dampers...

In Paris, the car almost caused a riot. Pedestrians pointed and yelled, drivers flashed their lights...

It is a crying shame that more manufacturers don't have the courage to build cars like the Renault Sport Spider...

Dramatic breakthroughs can often result from determined individual campaigning. Such was the case with the Spider.

Christian Contzen, the head of Renault Sport, commissioned the design and championed the car from day one...

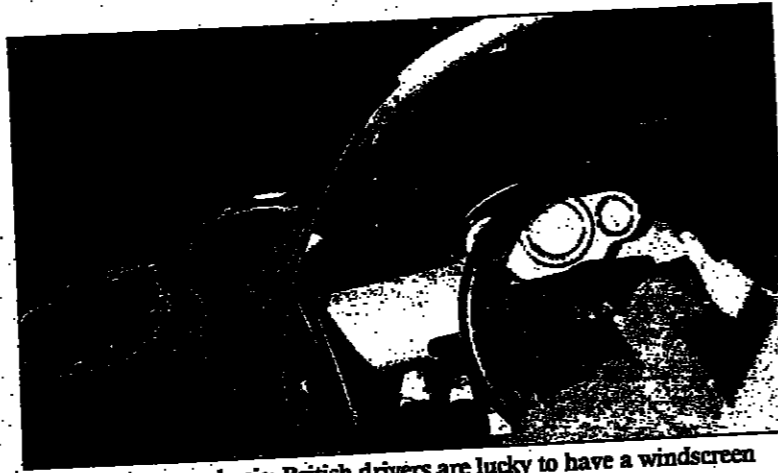
"The Spider is all about pleasure," says Contzen. "It can be likened to sailing, motorbiking or flying..."

Renault UK imported 100 Spiders. At all but a few have now found owners, despite our depressing weather...



Spider was the product of one man's inspiration — creating a unique car that nearly caused a riot in Paris

Monsieur Spider man, I presume



Interior is very basic: British drivers are lucky to have a windscreen

super-car ten times its worth. "It's arguably a folly," adds Contzen. "But it's an accessible folly. It's a passion to be lived to the absolute full."

We shared Contzen's passion for the Spider and this was our reason for driving to France in heavy rain, with no roof and no heater: the car was ready to meet its maker, and so were we.

We arrived unannounced. The idea was simply to thank him for creating such a great car, then turn around and drive back. Somebody had to do it.

Hope faded as Maryvonne Giraud, Contzen's personal assistant, said he was in the middle of an important meeting. It was impossible.

She agreed. The security guard showed us to the foyer of the main building where we sat among the Formula One engines on display.

When Mme Giraud appeared in the foyer, she had a surprise: Contzen was with her. He smiled as he puffed on a huge cigar. He'd decided to leave his meeting for a few minutes and greet the mad Englishmen.

"Hello! You have driven from England, no?" "Yes. I have come here in the Spider to shake your hand, Sir, to thank you for creating such a magnificent car. It's fantastic fun to drive."

"Thank you. Are you staying the night?" "No, we're only here for five minutes, to see you. Then, we drive back." I pointed into the setting sun. Contzen grinned and Mme Giraud puffed on his cigar while we took his photograph.



Thomas (right) greets Renault's boss

He was thrilled that we were enjoying his car in the right spirit. He produced a small camera and took a picture of us beside his car. It seemed as if we had made his day.

Back in the Spider, we paused to look at the factory. Six huge monoliths decorated the road outside, inscribed with numbers at the top.

"Renault, Champion du Monde. 1992, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97." The aluminum throttle pedal clacked to the floor, the Clío Williams engine spun to the redline, and we drove home.

Suzuki's traffic cure: mate a mod with a rocker

Paul Myles says a new superscooter could be the way to tempt drivers away from their cars

Despite increasingly impossible traffic congestion, many car drivers will never consider the traffic-beating alternative — powered two-wheeler. The stereotypical images of the greasy biker or the scooter-riding mod are deeply etched in people's minds.

Indeed, the two camps have kept themselves well apart ever since the Sixties, with big, bad superbikes appealing to speed-freaks while little, limp and unthreatening scooters attract the fashion-conscious out for a potter around town.

But for most people, neither of these vehicle types can challenge the all-round convenience of a car. There is, however, another option, one that blends the characteristics of both camps into the superscooter. These machines combine enough power to keep to the motorway speed limit with the light weight and automatic transmission of a modern scooter.

Superscooters have for some years ruled the roads in many European countries, where two-wheeled transport suffers no stigma. With the Government's transport White Paper focused on car driving as a problem, perhaps it is time

that British motorists consider this alternative.

Suzuki's AN250 Burgman is the latest interpretation of the superscooter and probably the best all-round transport I have ridden. It is just so easy to ride. Stab the electric-start button, twist the throttle and it blasts off the line with surprising speed

can top 80mph. The bodywork keeps most of the weather off the rider, and car drivers will feel comfortable with the familiar feet-forward riding position. The disc brakes continue the car theme by being linked front and rear via one of the handlebar levers. They provide ample performance to handle the bike's speed.

The instruments — speedometer, fuel and engine temperature gauges — are clear and easy to read. Safety features include a cut-out that stops the engine when the side-stand is down and a brake-lock to prevent the machine rolling away while parked. There is also an ignition lock that cannot be broken with a screwdriver.

Apart from the enormous fun of riding the Burgman, its fuel consumption is worth any car driver's consideration — around 70mpg. Its useful 33-litre underseat boot is big enough to take a briefcase.

When you consider that it can take you on stress-free trip through traffic from London's Docklands to the West End in no more than 30 minutes, the Burgman's £3,774 on-the-road cost may seem a small price to pay.

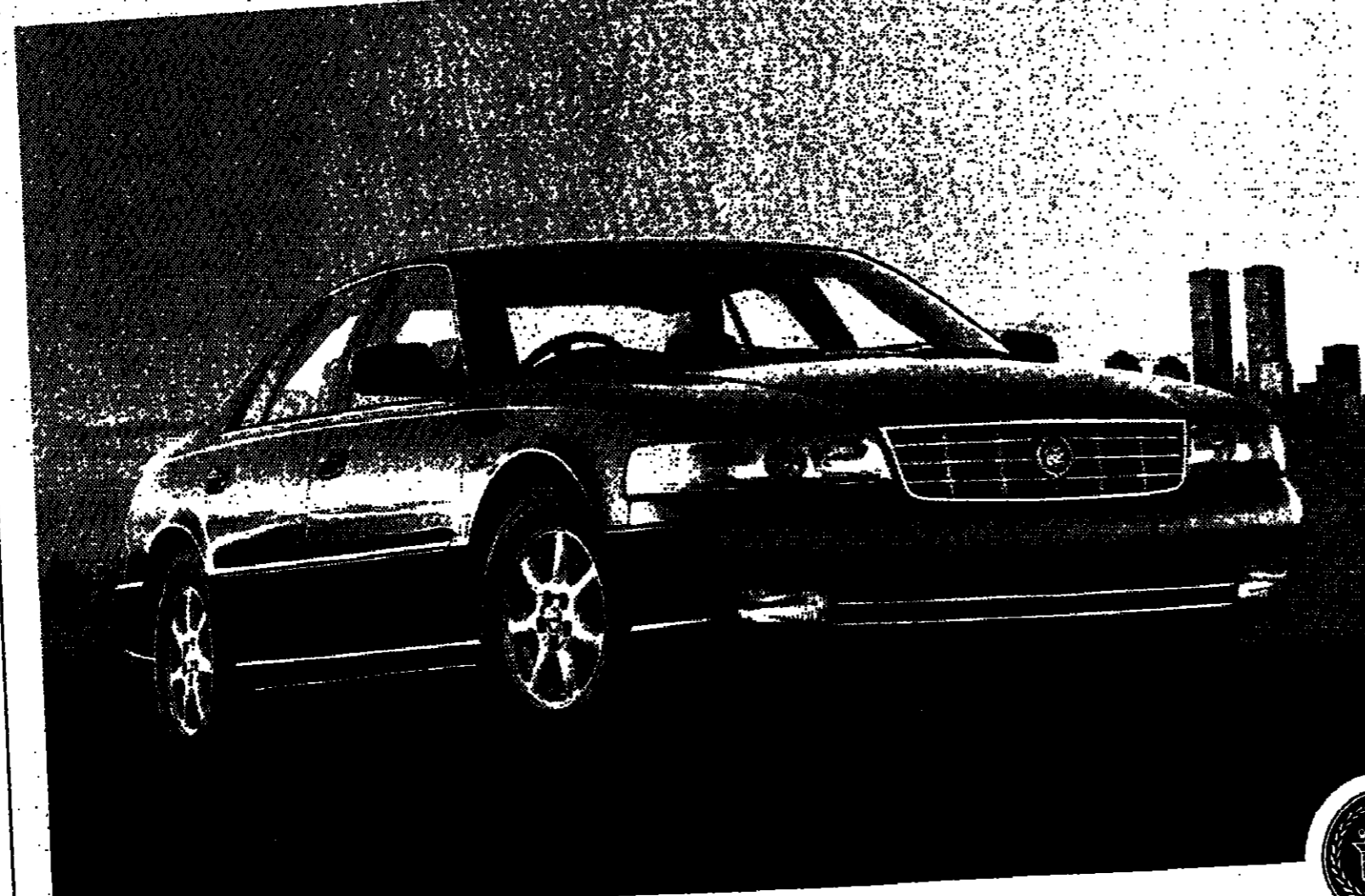
thanks to a gutsy 250cc four-stroke engine and the seamless gearchanges produced by the variable belt-drive.

The bulk of the machine's 350lb weight is slung low in the chassis, making the Burgman as flickable as a moped. Yet it boasts a wheelbase long enough to keep it steady for speed work on motorways, where the machine



Best feet-forward: drivers will be familiar with the riding position, and the brakes too

Experience the last word in Luxury.



Be one of the first to test drive the exciting new 'S' reg. RHD Cadillac Seville by calling:

0845 601 2121

On the road price £39,750



Cadillac

http://www.cadillaceurope.com

book reg. test now.

BMW's boss said that separating Rolls-Royce from Bentley would be a disaster, but that was before the company lost the bidding race to VW

Will Volks be split from Wagen too?

Charles Stewart Rolls and Frederick Henry Royce are spinning in their graves at 5,000rpm, but as befits the magnificent motor cars they created, all you can hear is the clicking of their tongues.

Rolls and Royce were men of the world, but the merger talks that brought their separate enterprises together in 1906 were a piece of cake compared with the fun and games we have been hearing about this week.

The news that Volkswagen, who had paid £430 million for Rolls-Royce, would be manufacturing Bentleys, whereas BMW, who had lost out in the battle for Rolls-Royce, would be manufacturing Rollers after all, having paid £40 million for the name, had me rocking with laughter when it broke on Tuesday. It was like being told that Roger Black, after coming second

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

in the Olympic 400 metres, would be given the gold medal.

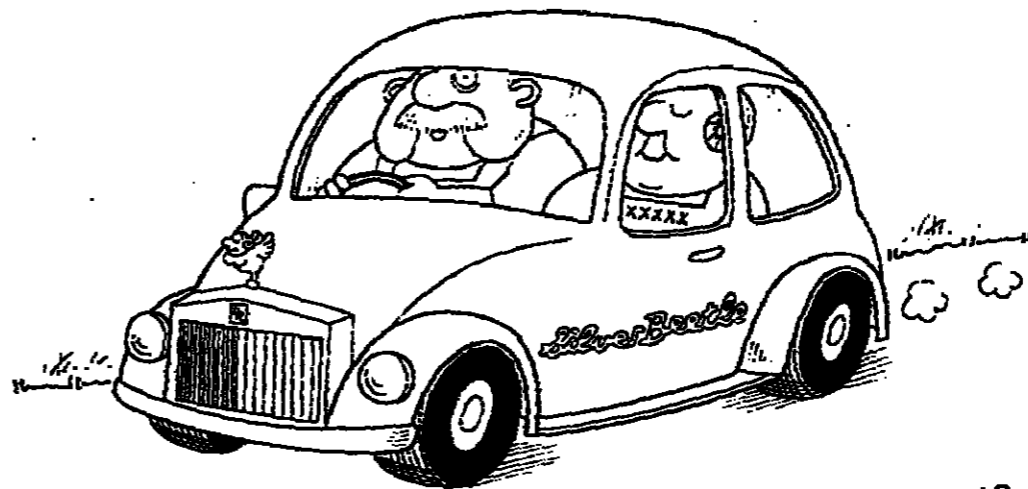
Or so it seemed at first. The received wisdom was that VW had been stitched up by those clever chaps from Bavaria. Although the cock-up theory is always more entertaining than the conspiracy theory, I do not think that either one ap-

plies here. Certainly VW and BMW each wanted the whole company at one stage. To support the point, let us pause for a quiz.

Who once said that Rolls-Royce without Bentley would be like Volks without Wagen? Bernd Pischke, the chairman of BMW, the company that will be making Rollers but not Bentleys.

And who said, on March 25 this year: "We have convinced ourselves that the two marques are inseparable"? Yes, that was Ferdinand Piech, the chairman of Volkswagen, which will soon be making Bentleys but not Rollers.

One might deduce from this that VW, privately, are sobbing in their *bielerhosen* and biting lumps out of their *lederhosen*. The inseparable have been separated. The Volks has turned right, the Wagen left, like something out of the Keystone Cops. Inseparable has turned out



to have all the permanence of an Elizabeth Taylor marriage.

There is another way of looking at this. BMW may have bought the Spirit of Ecstasy for £40 million but classy women are expensive to run. From 2003, the Roller will be homeless, whereas the VW Bentley will be built in the existing Rolls factory at Crewe, which has just had £40 million investment.

And then there is the curious business of that phrase from Piech. It seemed an odd expression, so I pursued earlier indications as to the mood at VW. Clearly, there were several people on the company board who always wanted to split Rolls-Royce and Bentley.

Indeed, the belief that VW and BMW have been daggers-drawn over Rolls-Royce is knocked on the

head by reports in the financial pages early this year, including this intriguing sentence: Herr Piech said that VW and BMW might share Rolls-Royce, with VW taking the Bentley marque and BMW taking Rolls-Royce.

BMW was apparently not interested in this plan at the time, but it would not have expected VW to outbid it for the company as a whole.

Once that happened, BMW would have warned quickly to the idea of sharing the company.

All of which convinces me that the smiles all round are fairly genuine. BMW gets to build Rolls-Royce cars after 2003, VW builds them until then (which is no small matter, with the Rolls Silver Seraph and the Bentley Arnage new to the marketplace). Sir Ralph Robbins, chairman of Rolls-Royce, is happy because he always wanted the company to go to BMW.

And the workers at Crewe who thought they would go on building Rollers? Nobody in the boardrooms gives a toss about them. Few care, either, about the small shareholders who thought they had sold the Rolls-Royce marque to VW. I think both groups have been treated shoddily and the workers' anger is understandable, though it will be tempered by the fact that Silver Seraph production will stay at Crewe even beyond 2003.

And then? I suspect that BMW will build future generations of the ultimate British status symbol in Germany. How ironic: Henry Royce built the Merlin engines that went into Spitfires and helped to win the Second World War. From the ashes of that conflict BMW rose to greatness. What goes around, comes around.

The Swatch car's time has come

Stuart Birch says the two-seater town car built collaboratively with Mercedes-Benz is set to become an urban icon as big as the Mini

What happens if you garnish car technology with designer time? You get smart. Smart is the result of a marriage between Mercedes-Benz, famous for its cars, and Swatch, famous for its fashionable watches. Together, they have rewritten the automotive design rulebook.

Shorter than a Mini but almost 5ft tall, the smart (with a lowercase 's', because the motto of its makers is "reduce to the max") is a two-seater powered by a rear-mounted, three-cylinder 600cc turbocharged engine and with styling inside and out that, sans concessions ranging from amusement, through disbelief, to derision.

As I drove a pre-production smart City Coupé through Barcelona's crowded streets this week, people stopped, stared and smiled. Motorcyclists found it intriguing, thinking perhaps that this chirpy little bug had somehow burst from a two-wheeled chrysalis.

It grew from an Independence Day barbecue at Mercedes-Benz's US design centre in 1992 which was attended by top managers, including Johann Tomforde, who had been doodling designs for a city vehicle for 20 years. He served a "dessert" in the shape of a prototype, and the bosses were impressed.

Meanwhile, in Europe, Nicolas G. Hayek of Swatch fame was considering using the design skills of his company, SMH, to create the Swatch-Mobile. In January 1993, Hayek, Tomforde and Mercedes-Benz boss Jürgen Hubbert got



Dashboard looks weird, too

together and formed the jointly owned Micro Compact Car (MCC) Corporation to develop and produce smart (it stands for Swatch, Mercedes and art).

It goes on sale in nine European countries in October — although the UK may have to wait about three years for a right-hand-drive version.

MCC says most city car journeys are made with only one or two persons aboard, so smart has plenty of room for two. Looking forward from the driving position, the smart seems quite big, but the driver can put a hand on the hatchback's rear window with ease.

Interior design is avant-garde: even the air vents look like mini Daleks. Seats are big and comfortable, luggage space reasonable, and the passenger area is contained within a strong safety cell.

Smart's birth is several months overdue. Late last year, Mercedes was highly embarrassed when its tall new A-Class fell over during the now famous "moose" test. Mercedes launched an intensive programme to solve the prob-



Smart makes a nippy town car that attracts more than its fair share of attention, though on open roads the slow steering and puny engine make keeping up speed hard work

lem, and smart received similar treatment. Its track was widened, wheelbase lengthened, suspension lowered, electric stability control fitted — thinner, glass was even used for the sunroof to help to lower the car's centre of gravity.

Although it may now avoid a moose safely, I am not too sure about smart's ability to get away if the moose decides to chase. Hustle it through a

corner and it suffers massive understeer, its front wheels — much narrower than those at the rear — have to be turned more and more as they scrub off speed, increasing steering effort and making the car feel dull and heavy on open roads.

But the ride is generally good for such a small car, and it coped well with all the cobblestones in Barcelona's old town, the city MCC chose for

its launch. It is also easy to park in tight spaces.

Smart's tiny petrol engine (an 800cc diesel is planned) revs gleefully, is frugal and clean, earning special tax concessions in Germany.

Power choice is 45bhp or 55bhp. Performance of the 55bhp car is nippy in town but lacking on the motorway, with pedal-to-the-metal and loss of gearchanges needed to keep

ahead of big trucks, but overall fuel consumption promises to average about 60mpg.

The version I tried was fitted with a six-speed, clutchless sequential transmission, with full automatic available at the press of a button. In auto mode it was hesitant and I preferred manual even in town. Grabbing the gearlever hastily to maintain momentum on a busy main road, I accidental-

ly nudged neutral. The engine-management system did not like it and cut power by about 80 per cent until I stopped and restarted the engine.

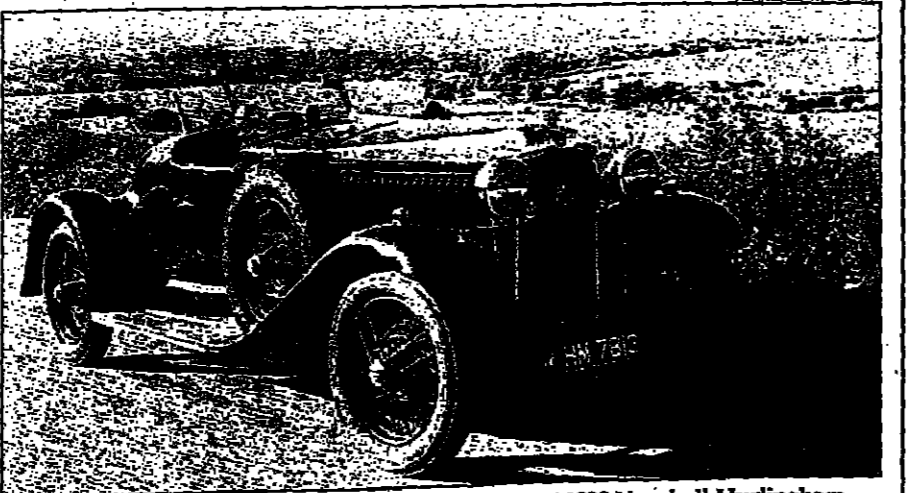
Smart test drivers have experienced a similar problem, and it should not happen on production cars.

German prices start at about £5,600 for the basic 45bhp version. Cabriolet and targa-top smarts are planned.

The long accessory list includes a "bodypanel fresh-up" kit enabling owners to change all the car's external plastic panels for other colours, like Mad Red or Hello Yellow.

The smart is a refreshingly different alternative to other tiddlers, including the Fiat Seicento. Like the Mini of the Sixties, it could become the car for trendy townies — and earn itself a smarty-pants image.

YOUR LAST CHANCE TO JOIN THE SHAKESPEARE RUN



Certain to make the selection is this Times readers' 1929 Vauxhall Hurlingham.

THIS IS the last chance for Times readers to join the annual run of historic and classic vehicles through Shakespeare country in their own machines this year, writes Tony Dawe.

Twenty places have been reserved for readers who can convince the organisers that their vehicle is special enough to take part in the heavily oversubscribed event on Sunday, September 6, which always attracts large crowds along its 68-mile route.

Scores of proud owners responded to the first announcement of the offer, seeking to enter cars ranging from a 1925 3.5-litre Chrysler to a replica Jaguar XKSS built last year.

Martin Hone, director of International Festival Services, the organisers, is still looking for readers with classic and vintage cars manufactured between the 1890s and start of the Second World War.

One entrant certain of a place in the Times Twenty is a rare 1929 Vauxhall Hurlingham Roadster, owned by Alan and Hilary Knight of Abingdon, Oxfordshire. "I have been able to discover only three or four in the UK, with probably a dozen more worldwide," says Alan.

The Institute of Mechanical Engineers, the sponsors, is hoping to broaden the appeal of the event with two collections of cars illustrating the high technology, computer design and revolutionary materials that feature on modern machines.

The veteran and classic cars on the parade will be followed by 20 of the latest MG sports cars, and by the institute's "innovative 20", featuring BMWs, Porsches and a Lamborghini. The parade starts from Coombe Country Park near Coventry.

To enter, send a short letter explaining why your vehicle deserves a place on the IMechE Coventry Run, plus a colour photograph of it, to: The Times Twenty, PO Box 200, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B75 7TR. Entries close on August 5.

French-bred slices through cars

What with Johnny Halliday, striped shirts and the Maginot Line, the French have never been short on quirky style, and now one of the great icons of Gallic motorcycling is back — the Velo Solex, writes John Naish.

Velo What? Any visitor to La belle France will inevitably have had to dodge through swarms of these little buzzboxes, ridden by slowness-crazed adolescents wearing blousons stuffed with breadsticks.

In 1946, the French, in a burst of typically perverse ingenuity, conspired to introduce to the mass market a motorised cycle with the engine at the front, rather than the middle, or even the back — where one would normally look for it.

The breakthrough took off on the Continent, with more than eight million units sold in its 50-year history.

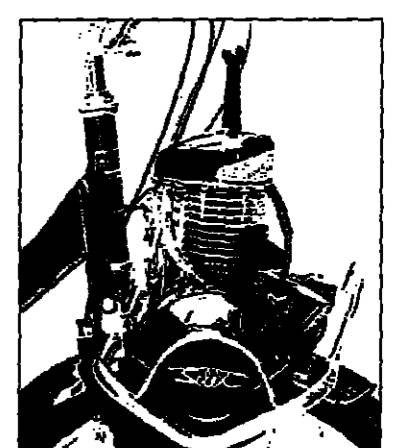
Not so in Britain, where next to none have ever been sold — most probably because they look suspiciously continental, will never bother the 30mph limit, and rather resemble the product of an amorous encounter between an accommodating moped and an unscrupulous butchers' pushbike.

But the Velo's new importers believe that retro-crazed Britain is ready to embrace the Velo as a sharply practical slice of Gallic chic. Not that the new bike is French: the original company ceased production when its founder died, and the original tools have been set up in a factory in Hungary.

Starting the 49cc motor is a strange though easily adopted procedure that involves pedalling, a lever that drops the engine on to the front tyre, and a



Try as you might, the Velo won't beat 30mph, though it is a wizard in jams



Velo's heart: hyper-economic motor

little handlebar lever. Once away, the throttle is left fully open as the motor drives through the front wheel to its top speed of around 22mph-and-a-bit. A burst of pedal assistance will improve acceleration, and that bit of extra oomph turns the machine into a top-level city traffic beater — just so long as you assiduously maintain momentum.

I crossed lunchtime London, from Fulham to Wapping, faster than ever before: it certainly left my usual 900cc Kawasaki gasping. The secret in these

clogged circumstances is the Velo's pushbike-like slimness — it can slip through gaps that have dispatch riders shaking their fists.

It is another matter when the roads open up, but until John Prescon finally rescues us from our car-crazed vices, that will remain a city-centre rarity.

Apart from the Velo's ability to make haste slowly, the importers are banking on its abstemious consumption (around 200mpg) and rock-bottom price (at just under £700, with £60 flat-

rate insurance for two people — surely the cheapest thing on two motorised wheels) to make it sell. On top of that, the seat can be taken down for those around 5ft who can't manage modern scooters' tall seats.

But the cheapness comes at a premium — there's no speedo, indicators or ignition lock, you have to pre-mix the two-stroke oil with the petrol on rare visits to the pumps. Some of the cycle parts — brakes included — could do with beefing up: my heavy-handedness resulted in a broken throttle cable and a snapped lever on the handlebar.

The last problem facing the Velo is that many buy little bikes for a touch of tough street cred. As a female colleague pointed out: "You cannot, I assure you, pull birds on that." She might not be from Paris, but I think she has a point.



LOCKED IN 53

A plan to ease poor annuity returns has backfired

WEEKEND MONEY

NO TEA PARTY 55

Why it pays to trade your endowment



'Allo John, gotta second-hand motor?

As status-conscious motorists roar off the forecourts today in their S-reg cars, Susan Emmett says it may make more sense to buy used

Thousands of motorists will be gearing up for the last August showroom scramble today and pushing sales to an expected record of 530,000 this month...



While most second-hand car buyers have to content themselves with mass-market metal such as a Ford or Peugeot, if you don't do many miles, a pre-owned classic such as this replica D-type Jaguar can bring back motoring pleasure

Others include new entrants Maxcar in Park Royal, West London and CarLand in West Thurrock, Essex. Both companies plan to expand further...

The growing cost of being mobile

Buying a new car might be expensive but the money you put forward for a motor is just the start. The cost of running a car is high and set to rise even further with the Government's drive towards cutting the number of private vehicles on the road.

Measures recently unveiled in the transport White Paper state that councils are to be allowed to charge drivers for entering busy city centres and holiday areas such as national parks...

According to the AA, it costs an ordinary driver about £4,650 a year to run a car, compared with just over £4,000 two years ago.

City motorists also face high charges for parking in the centre or in some cases outside their homes.

anking on

WHY CAR PREMIUMS ARE RISING THIS YEAR

Producers of a new S-reg are at greater risk of having their car stolen or being involved in an accident, according to research by Eagle Star, a leading motor insurer.

underwriting losses in the insurance market take their toll, the average premium for a typical couple driving a Ford Escort has risen from £234 to £245 in the past nine months.

John Douglas, director of Maxcar, said: "Everyone has their own horror story about buying a used car. This new approach puts the customer in control, just like buying anything else from a good quality retailer."

Invest On-Line is a trading name of Royal & SunAlliance Unit Trust Management Limited, registered in England with No. 2710242, a member of the Royal & SunAlliance Life & Pensions Marketing Group.

THE UK TRACKER PEP. Lowest Tracker PEP charges in the UK. ROYAL & SUNALLIANCE. Don't miss this opportunity to maximise your last ever PEP allowance.

Reserve cash now to spend whenever you want. RESERVE. Supposing someone was willing to put a sum of money - £3,000 say - at your disposal? You could keep it in reserve for whenever you decided you needed it.

Trans. Now

Susan Emmett says being flexible could cut your loan costs



Banking on a new car

This weekend the spirit of Toad of Toad Hall will spread throughout the land, as motorists gaze in awe at the new models just arrived in the showrooms. They will also be bombarded by special finance packages, ranging from hire purchase deals, personal contract purchases to personal loans.

£200,000 Life Insurance for as little as 55p a day

If you have regular bills to pay and a family to support it's understandable if you've put the issue of life insurance to the back of your mind. After all, cover can be costly, and you need money to hand.



General Accident

Form for General Accident insurance application, including fields for Name, Surname, Address, Telephone No, Date of Birth, and Smoker status.

FRIDAY AUGUST 1 1998... TY 55... says to your investment... Motor... growing cost of mobile...

now... enever... ESERVED

The Legal & General Index-Tracking PEP

Transfer

Transfer your existing PEPs into the Legal & General Index-Tracking PEP for low charges and proven performance

A glance at the table below will show you how the Legal & General All-Share Index-Tracking PEP has outperformed all its major All-Share Index-Tracking competitors since its launch.

Now for proven performance and low charges

Form for Legal & General Index-Tracking PEP transfer, including fields for Name, Address, Telephone, and Date of Birth.

Gartmore advertisement featuring the slogan 'Look forward to sunny days, look back on a good investment.' and a list of investment funds.

Handwritten text in a box at the top center of the page.

Main table containing unit trust prices, organized into columns with headers for fund names, prices, and other financial metrics.

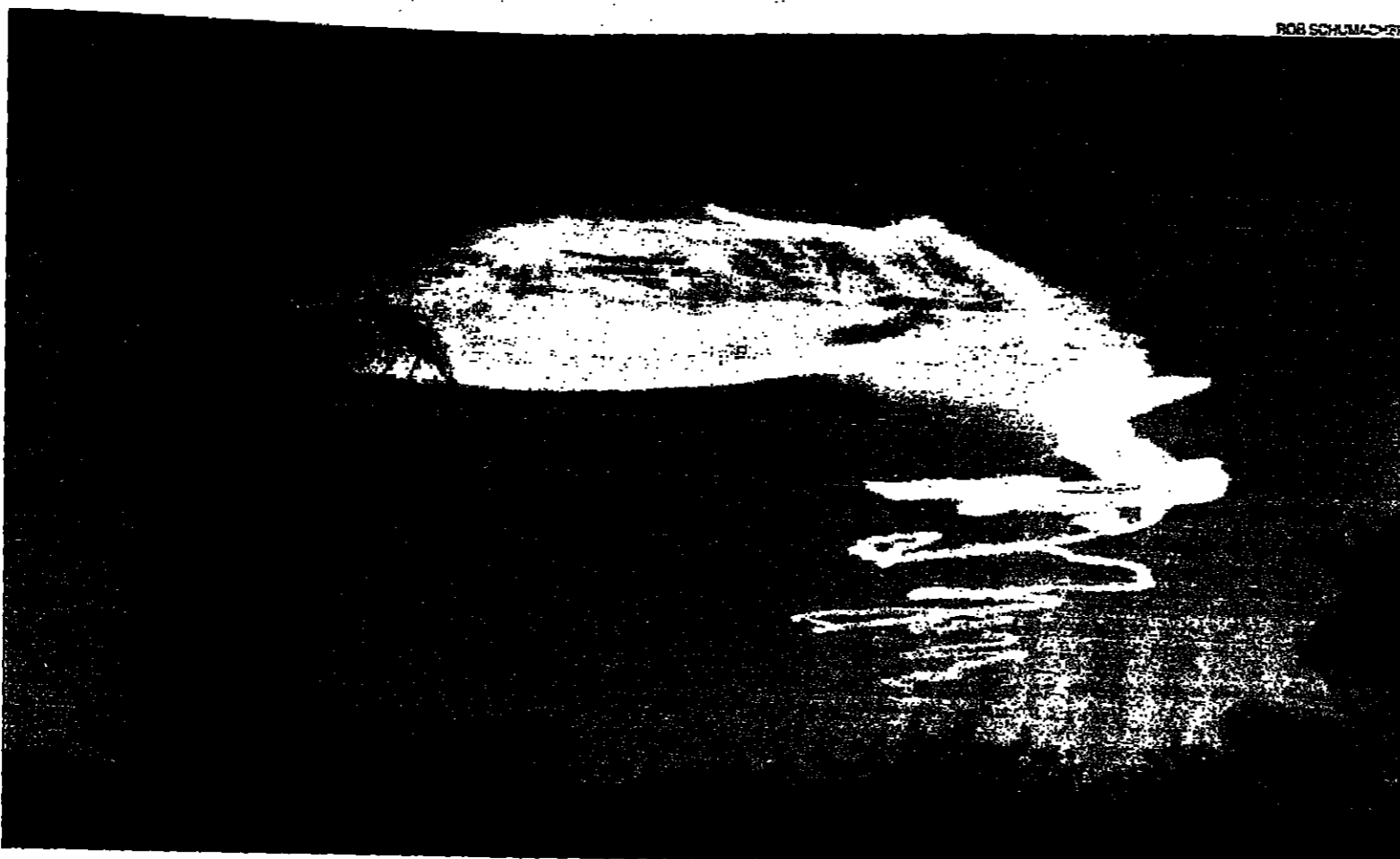
Advertisement for 'FREE OFFER' featuring the text 'Discover How You Could Make Serious Money From Penny Shares' and 'FREEPHONE 0800 823873'.

Another

Pensio

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom right of the page.

Magnus Grimond watches the smaller companies sector switch into reverse



Another false dawn?

This year's resurgence of the smaller company has proved a dismally short-lived affair. After many false dawns, it looked as if 1998 would at last mark the revival of this underperforming sector of the stock market. From the start of January to the end of May, the 1,800 or so fiddlers represented by the FTSE small capitalisation index rose nearly 21 per cent, comfortably eclipsing the 16 per cent gain chalked up by the FTSE 100 index of Britain's biggest companies.

Was this the beginning of the end of the City's infatuation with large companies, such as Glaxo Wellcome and Barclays, which so boosted tracker funds last year? Well no, actually. Since the early June decision by the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee to raise interest rates a quarter point to 7 per cent, smaller companies' shares have gone into reverse. They have now collectively lost more than half the gains made this year, while the all share and Footsie indices remain close to their record highs.

Almost every business survey points to the hammering being received by smaller businesses. Latest figures from Ernst & Young, the accountant, show that quoted companies with turnover under £200 million accounted for most of the profit warnings in the second quarter. Indeed, the proportion of warnings from the tiniest fully listed companies — those with sales up to £50 million — rose from under a third to over 40 per cent between the first and second quarters.

The trouble is that higher money costs have gone hand-in-hand with the renewed strength of the pound, which has doubly hurt manufacturers, many of which are small companies. Peter Webb, manager of the Eaglet and Premier smaller company funds, says: "Coming with the base rate rise, there are increasing worries about the competitiveness of smaller companies with the currency where it is. A lot of larger fund managers think: 'Why do we need to be in smaller companies when the Fotsie is going up as it is?'"

But he says most are mak-

ing a big mistake. "We are convinced the majority of investors are in the wrong things. There is a substantial overvaluation of large caps, given the economic fundamentals over the next 12 months."

Surprisingly perhaps, Anthony Bolton, of Fidelity, the investment group, would tend to agree. "Obviously, relative to bigger companies, an aspect of smaller companies is their sensitivity to the economic outlook and whether the economy has a hard or a soft landing. I think the outlook is pretty reasonable because they are discounting more of a slowdown than is reasonable."

His "philosophical preference" as a value investor is for smaller companies, he says. Of the 170-odd stocks in his £1.1 billion Fidelity Special Situations Trust, only two are Fotsie stocks.

David McBain of BT Alex Brown, the broker, says, the consensus of analysts' forecasts is for small caps to grow earnings by 10.7 per cent this year, well over double the 4.4 per cent expected from Fotsie companies. But next year there will be little to choose between the two, with bottom line growth just short of 9 per cent for both groups. The big difference is in the ratings, with Fotsie companies trading on 20 times this year's earnings, falling to 18, well ahead of small caps on 16 times dropping to 14.

Ian Rushbrook, manager of the Personal Assets investment trust, remains sceptical that this represents a buying opportunity. "Certainly smaller companies have had a rough time, but historically they were overrated compared with larger companies. I never believed small is beautiful."

He points to distortions in the performance figures for small caps. "They have a much higher percentage failure rate, which tends to fall out of the analysis, so the data is faulty. But historically they outperformed and the institutions bought them and it became a self-fulfilling proph-

cy. "A bigger quoted company means greater liquidity in the shares, which makes them more attractive to large and international investors, he says. And there have been greater opportunities to make them more efficient, through computer technology, cost-cutting and the like."

But Gervais Williams, head of smaller companies at Garrmore, the fund manager, believes the game is starting to run out of steam. Big companies are now having to turn to giant mergers to squeeze out further efficiencies, he says. "We are looking for the staff savings and capital savings and outsourcing savings of the large cap sectors to have moved as far as they can."

After 20 years of underperformance, small companies are "well down in the valley by now and there will be a bottom to this valley and when we get to the other side, we will be making hatfuls for our clients", he forecasts optimistically.

But despite having built up

Webb cites Abacus Polar, an electronic component distributor, trading on around eight times forward earnings, with the shares yielding 7.2 per cent; or Sedgemoor, another component distributor, on a forward p/e of 12 and a yield of 4.6 per cent.

Meanwhile, those brave souls at River & Mercantile, the fund manager, this year launched their own smaller companies fund. Formerly dedicated to investing in management buyouts, the First Smaller Companies fund stands as testimony to good stock picking. Since launch in early January to early July, the fund has grown 21 per cent, well ahead of the Small Cap index, putting it into the top 25 per cent of smaller company funds.

Anthony Cross, the fund manager, puts his success down to strict screening to filter out companies where there are both high levels of employee shareholdings and valuable "intellectual capital". These companies are better equipped to face a deteriorating market, suffering from devaluation where most do not have market leadership, he argues. So far this year there have been 26 new issues raising £146 million on the Alternative Investment Market, the bourse specially created by the Stock Exchange for fledgling companies.

Andrew Buchanan of Beacon Investment Trust, the specialist AIM investor, says AIM companies should be looked at differently from smaller companies on the full list.

"AIM companies are mostly fairly new companies: service sector companies or new technology companies which are growing their own market-place. To a certain extent, they're insulated from the general economy," he said. How long that continues remains to be seen: support services rivalled textile companies at the top of Ernst & Young's second-quarter profit warnings list.

In the long run, a good little 'un should always outperform a good big 'un, but picking the winners and running with them through what could be turbulent times ahead is likely to test the steeliest of nerves.



yawn, yawn.

PEP has made...

Since its launch in 1997, PEP has been nothing but consistent, it's remained in its sector month after month. To find out more, call us today. And don't miss out on news.

Virgin direct

Virgin Direct Personal Financial Services Ltd is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority. The price of units and any income from them can go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount you invest. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to the future. You can invest in a PEP right up until 5 April 1999 when they will attract the same tax benefits as the new Individual Savings Account. All calls are recorded and monitored. *Source: Micropal. Figures calculated from 6.3.95 to the end of each month up until 30.4.98 for all funds in the UK growth and income sector during the whole of this period, buying to selling unit prices, growth income reinvested.

WHY STICK WITH A FIXED RATE WHEN YOU COULD AIM HIGHER?

CURRENTLY UP TO 8.00% GROSS P.A. (VARIABLE)

Fixed rate bonds are a great way to earn guaranteed interest on your savings. But if interest rates go up, usually you have to stick with the rate you've got.

NOW YOU CAN AIM HIGHER

With our new One Year Variable Bond, the higher interest rates go, the more you'll benefit - at a rate that's guaranteed to be at least 0.50% gross p.a. above our 90 Day Account.

Also, unlike a fixed rate bond, you can add to your savings whenever you wish, so the more you put in, the more you'll get out when your Bond matures in a year's time.

ASK FOR DETAILS TODAY

You can open a One Year Variable Bond with a lump sum from as little as £2,500 by post or alternatively you can visit one of our local branches.

CALL US NOW 0345 665522

LINES ARE OPEN:
9am to 8pm - Monday to Friday
9am to 7pm - Weekends
OR FREEPOST THE COUPON TODAY

COVENTRY BUILDING SOCIETY
TLC NOT PLC

Please contact me with further information on the One Year Variable Bond: by post by telephone (Tick as appropriate)

Title _____ Initials _____ Surname _____
Address _____
Town _____ County _____
Postcode _____ Daytime Tel No. _____

Please complete and post to: Coventry Building Society, FREEPOST CV24, PO Box 600, Coventry CV1 5DR. 1118

Mark: Annual rate of 8.00% gross p.a. (variable) on balance of £2000 plus £400 net £. Variable interest rate is variable. Interest will be paid out of the basic rate of the Coventry Building Society. Full details of interest rates, conditions, terms, and general conditions are available on request. Information correct as of 1st July 1998.

Head Office: Coventry Building Society, Economic House, PO Box 9, High Street, Coventry CV1 5DR. Telephone: Customer Services 0345 665522

Pensions by phone.

You can pick up the phone and get pensions information or advice and even set up a plan, quickly and without fuss.

Call, 8am-10pm, 7 days a week quoting ref: 2888940
0345 6789 10
or talk to your Independent Financial Adviser.

SCOTTISH WIDOWS
Looking good for your pension.

For your protection, your calls to Scottish Widows may be recorded or monitored and information or advice will only be provided on Scottish Widows products. Issued by Scottish Widows Fund and Life Assurance Society. Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.

Mandy's first merger mystery

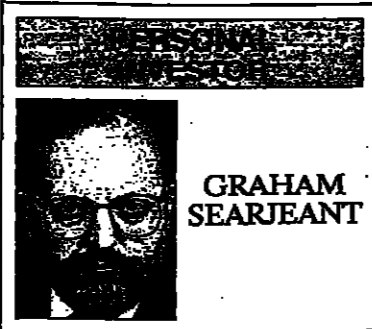
Wessex Water has presented Peter Mandelson, the new boss at the DTI, with an early test of his attitude to mergers. Margaret Beckett, who was in the hot seat before him, was branded with the perennial complaint that she was inconsistent in deciding which takeovers to send to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The newcomer should not lose much sleep over that. If politicians could not be contrary, there would be no point allowing them discretion. And mechanical rules would be needlessly restrictive.

WaterWatch, the South Yorkshire pressure group, immediately asked the DTI to stop Wessex's agreed takeover by Enron, an aggressive American power group. This looks an easy one for Mr Mandelson and for Ian Byatt, the water regulator. The companies' trading does not overlap and Enron has resources to back Wessex's obligations. Most shareholders will be relieved if Mr Mandelson casually raises his thumb and fishes a tougher issue from his in-tray.

Though highly rated in the past, Wessex shares have lagged behind the market average this year. Water shares are weak ahead of a five-year price review, in the time-honoured tradition of utilities. Ironically, Wessex lagged even more because a potential bidder, its partner in a waste venture, fell by the wayside. So Enron could offer a deceptively big premium.

Many private shareholders, especially those who live in Wessex, will still be unhappy that the life of Wessex as an accountable, publicly quoted British com-



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

pany will end in this way. Utilities owned by big, foreign groups remain accountable to the regulator. But they are no longer exposed to investors and have no incentive to do more than keep their noses clean. Foreign-owned electricity companies are virtually invisible.

You cannot raise water policy issues or even boardroom pay at the annual meeting. Your suggestions are likely to lose the attention that even the smallest shareholder can command. Wessex has been responsive to public mood, most recently in an initiative to protect rare habitats. Sometimes it has been an example to others. Why should it bother in future?

Sadly, the loss of public accountability is an inevitable trend, along with investors' ability to identify with and influence local utilities. Mr Mandelson would spend his time well learning why.

In Wessex's case, one reason is clear. In October 1996 Ian Lang, the last Tory DTI boss, supported an unobtrusive MMC

report that said Wessex should not take over next-door South West Water. Wessex was lumped in with the much larger Severn Trent, whose rival offer was a non-starter. Most people thought Wessex's bid would kill several potential bids with one throw. Mr Lang's easy decision left Wessex too small to build an international water or waste business and led logically to its takeover by Enron.

There is, however, a more general reason for the trend to foreign ownership. We shareholders see how quoted utilities are constantly pilloried, depressing share prices on a cyclical basis. We must really hit shareholders, is the cry. Why?

Managers are scorned as "fat cats" whatever they are paid. Ahead of the price review, any rise in pay is exposed as some ersatz scandal. In one of her final acts, Mrs Beckett made new proposals to expose utility directors' pay uniquely to public haggling on the basis of how long it takes the switchboard to answer complaints about water bills. Shareholders alone should conduct that scrutiny.

In practice, as a result of this absurd clamour, no one will. As soon as the utility is taken over by a smooth-talking foreign group, it disappears from view, along with the remuneration of the managers of divisional subsidiaries who now run the local UK utility. And Britain has lost yet another successful quoted company that could have been a growth point.

Public accountability is lost because it is abused when we have it. Think on that, Mr Mandelson.

Time to get down to that tax form again

TAX SELF-ASSESSMENT



The rigorous self-assessment regime leaves taxpayers little time for relaxation. Barely have they recovered from completing their first returns under the new system than they must brace themselves to undergo the process once more. Penalties await those who did not pay the second instalment of their 1997-98 tax liability by yesterday's due date. Much is still outstanding of the £4.3 billion expected.

The tedious task of dealing with this year's return will be made less onerous if you meet the first deadline for the completion of the form which falls on September 30. Submitting the form by this date does not mean that you pay your tax any earlier and removes from you the responsibility of calculating your own tax.

The arrangement has another advantage for employees. If they owe less than £1,000 in tax, the Revenue will adjust their tax coding, allowing them to pay the tax month by month rather than in a lump sum. If you miss the September 31 deadline, you can postpone the duty until January 31, 1999, the final deadline, but you must work out how much you owe.

Those aiming for September 30 will find it of some comfort to know that there are a number of areas that have proved especially problematic for a large number of people. Elspeth May of KPMG, the accountant, suggests that before you start, you gather together all the documents you need. You may need to request certificates of tax deducted from banks and building societies as these are not sent automatically.

The Revenue has compiled its own list of frequently asked questions. So has Pearl Assurance, derived from the tax advice helpline which it offers insurance policyholders. Drawing on the Revenue's advice together with that of

David Norman, principal consultant at KPMG, Leicester, the following are some key questions and answers for baffled form-fillers.

QWhat do the tax codes mean?

AThe main code is the PAYE code given to all employees, while if you are wholly self-employed you will have an individual reference number. The PAYE code indicates to employers what tax has to be deducted at source and what allowances can be claimed.

It is worth checking you have been given the right code, and the Inland Revenue notes sent out with the tax return explain how to do this.

QHow do I calculate capital gains tax on sales of shares and property?

AIf you think you may have a capital gains liability on either property or shares, you will need to have accurate information on the dates you acquired either, and the amounts spent. To work out your liability you will need to take into account indexation, for which special tables and notes are provided. The Inland Revenue may not have sent these with your tax form, so you will need to request them separately (Notes on Capital Gains). CGT is a particularly complex area where it may be wise to seek extra advice if you are unsure. You do not usually

need to pay CGT on the sale of a house, for example, except where it has been let or left vacant. Working out the liability on shares may also be complex where, for example, one stock has been acquired with a number of purchases over time, or where you may have taken shares for dividend. CGT is one of the hardest areas to tackle, says Mr Norman, and one that the Revenue may well query, particularly if you complete the form yourself.

QWhat about tax liability after paying stamp duty on property and shares?

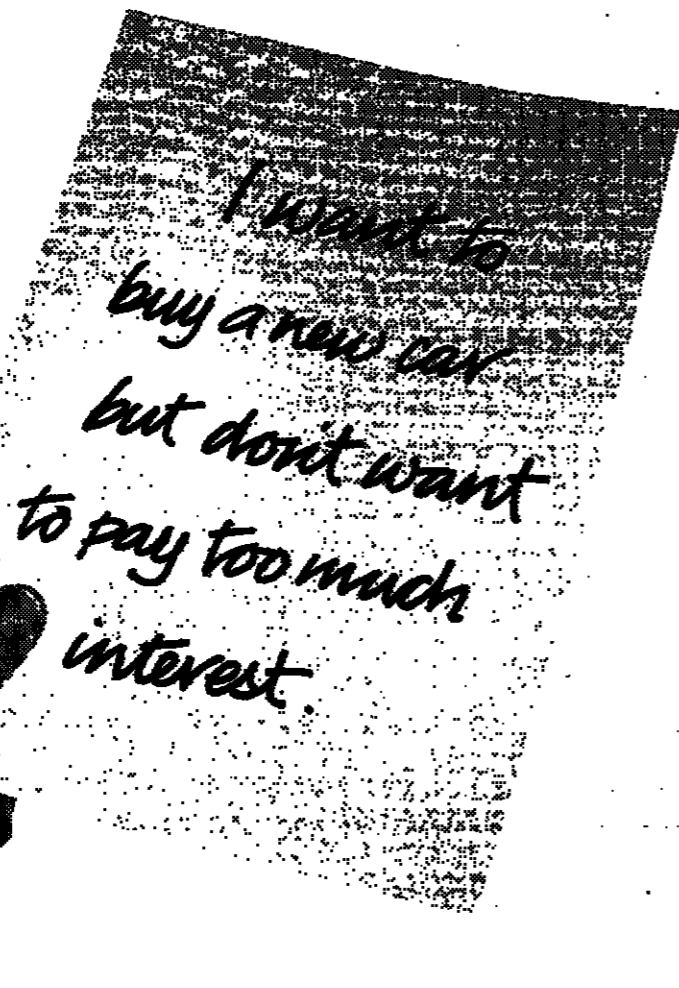
AStamp duty paid on property and shares against capital gains tax liability, so keeping all records of payments relating to purchases is vital.

QWhat is the tax liability on life policies?

AThis is another complex area, though the key distinction is between qualifying and non-qualifying policies. Broadly speaking if it is a policy where you make regular payments such as an endowment linked to a mortgage, it is likely to be a qualifying policy and you will not have to pay tax when the policy matures. The exception to this is where the policy is cashed in or surrendered before three quarters of its term has run. Policies where you pay an initial lump sum such as a with profit bond are likely to be classed as non-qualifying and tax may be due on the proceeds. This is more likely to affect higher-rate payers, but they are likely to pay 17 per cent if the policy is deemed to have had basic-rate tax already deducted.

QIs it necessary to send in dividend vouchers, P60s and interest statements?

AYou must include information on your income and allowances but you should not send in the paperwork.



The Corporate Bond PEP

6.9% pa tax free

An interest rate of 8.6% would be required in a bank or building society deposit account to achieve 6.9% net pa for a basic rate taxpayer

0500 11 66 22



The new Woolwich Open Plan. So flexible it lets you write the rules.

Most mortgages tie you down. The new Open Plan mortgage sets you free, puts you in control. It can even put you on the road because Open Plan combines a mortgage with the security of a reserve back-up loan that you can use for almost anything you like, including a new car. You'll have to go a long way to find a more competitive rate than 8.6% APR.

RESERVE BACK UP LOAN
8.6% (APR)

So, why not drop into your local Woolwich branch for a chat, or ring us on 0845 60 50506 (quoting ref OP771/8). We'll arrange for a quote or for you to talk to the people who can help you get what you want. The sooner you do, the sooner you'll be in the driving seat.

Get much more with the
WOOLWICH
CALL 0845 60 50506

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT. A first charge over your property will be repaid in priority. For interest, only loans are added to the capital at the end of the mortgage term. Mortgages are subject to status, valuation and a minimum age of 18. A written question is available on request. Woolwich plc represents only Woolwich Life, Woolwich Unit Trust and Woolwich Plan Managers, which are regulated by the Prudential Supervision Authority for the insurance, pension, unit trust and investment business. Typical example: Purchase price £250,000, main mortgage £250,000, charged at 8.25% (APR) 8.5% (though after the capped rate period it will be fully variable), 200 monthly payments of £2,041.75 gross, total interest payments of £274,000.00, interest account £10,000, charged at 8.25% (APR) 8.5% (though after the capped rate period it will be fully variable), 60 monthly payments of £2,023.34 gross, total interest of £21,941.40, total capital paid of £10,000.00, accrued interest on main mortgage of £192.31, accrued interest on reserve account £283.71, value of fee £238.00, settlor's fee £388.00, arrangement fee £388.00, deeds administration fee £88.00. Total amount payable of £335,000.00, 80% of 8.5% variable, accrued interest assumes that the mortgage starts in the middle of the month. Maximum advance not to exceed 90% of property value. If the capped rate mortgage is redeemed in full or repayments of capital in any 12 month period exceed 10% of the original amount borrowed or it is transferred to another advance before 1st September 2003, 8 months' gross interest will be charged at the prevailing standard variable rate or capped rate, whichever is higher at the time of transfer, redemption or payment. *Subject to agreed limits and terms and conditions. Registered office: Watling Street, Reigate, Surrey RH8 9AT. Registered in England no 2220589. Woolwich plc adheres to the principles of the Code of Mortgage Lending Practice. Copies of the code are available on request.

Advertisement Make money from shares

Are you interested in shares but unsure where to begin? Could you be making more of your investments? Have you recently become a shareholder through a building society conversion or a privatisation? Owning shares need not be as complicated as you might think – and it can boost your finances. The Which? Guide to Shares provides an independent introduction to share ownership. Explaining all the jargon and packed with practical advice, this 256-page guide will help you maximise your investments. You'll learn how to assess your financial position and how to build and manage a portfolio of investments which are tailor-made to your financial goals.

It explains how to • work out which shares are best for you • evaluate share prices • demystify company reports and accounts • assess levels of risk • buy and sell shares through a broker, share shop or bank • benefit from company perks, rights issues and company takeovers. Owning shares is intriguing, fun and potentially rewarding. So don't miss out! At just £9.99 (P&P FREE), The Which? Guide to Shares is a great investment. To order, send your name and address, the book title and your payment (cheque made payable to Which? Ltd or credit card number with expiry date) to: Which?, PO Box 89, Dept SP278, Hertford, SG14 1TB. Orders are normally despatched within 14 days of receipt. Full refund if not satisfied.

WANT MORE £ FOR YOUR ENDOWMENT POLICY THAN THE SURRENDER VALUE?...

Money Matters...CALL US NOW TO SEE IF YOU CAN SELL IT!

More and more people are recognising our unique place in the TRADED ENDOWMENT market. As the only truly independent brokers & electronic auctioneers we get you top prices and fast transactions, with complete security.

iptc THE INSURANCE POLICY TRADING COMPANY LTD
For FREE valuations
HEAD OFFICE: Tel: 01583 427875 Fax: 01463 416688
LONDON OFFICE: Tel: 01552 634422 Fax: 01552 634466
www.iptrading.com

Foreign & Colonial Invested the investment trust in 1968 "to give the investor of moderate means the same advantages as the large capitalist".

	Foreign & Colonial Investment Trust PLC	Unit Trust Average	Investment Trust Average
1978	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000
1983	£2,573	£2,304	£2,276
1988	£5,617	£5,360	£5,316
1993	£15,616	£8,575	£8,379
1998	£28,135	£14,226	£13,068

Get rich slow.

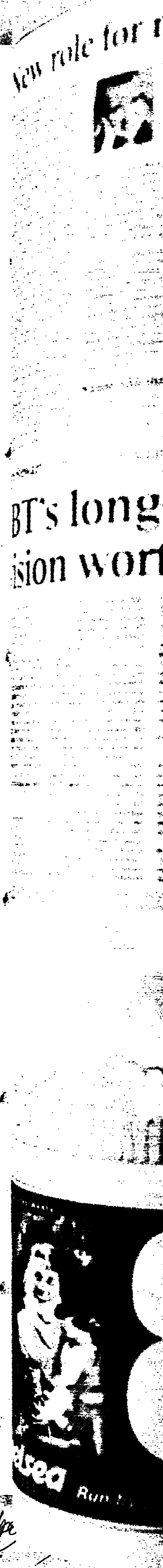
Many people are concerned that investing in just one market could leave their savings exposed. We invest in up to 60 of the world's markets at any one time and so aim to reduce the risk of one market having a disproportionate effect; something we have been doing successfully for 130 years.

Many of our trusts invest across a range of international markets; you can access them and our expertise by saving regularly through our Private Investor Plan. With Foreign & Colonial, you put the experts to work, spreading your risk flexibly and inexpensively.

For a free brochure, Phone 0181 880 8120, Fax 0181 211 8777 any time, stating the coupon code. Alternatively, visit our website at www.fandc.co.uk, or return the coupon.

To: Foreign & Colonial Management Ltd, PO Box 11020, London N4 1UA.
PLEASE PRINT
Title Initial Surname
Address
Postcode Code P167A

Foreign & Colonial



New role for ministerial double act

The ministerial reshuffle was carefully staged to suggest that the autumn will be a time of unremitting toil in Government, with all ministers vying to equal the Chancellor's enthusiasm for long hours.

But two ministers in new jobs must be especially devoted to their desks if they are to rescue the two schemes that formed the basis of new Labour's policies on personal savings and pensions. The individual savings account (Isa) was designed to turn those with an aversion to thrift into models of financial rectitude. The stakeholder pension was supposed to work the same miracle on those who make no provision for retirement.

The Isa is now the responsibility of Patricia Hewitt, the new Economic Secretary to the Treasury. Was she dismayed to hear this week that the supermarkets who were intended to play a leading role in the selling of Isas are being less than co-operative? They are unlikely to offer Isas at the all-destroying ministers' Norman Rockwell vision of beaming shoppers with straining Sainsbury bags and replete Isa passbooks.

Alistair Darling, the new Secretary of State for Social Security, will supposedly find proposals for the stakeholder pension in his in-tray. Or has the plan for a pension for those in low-paid casual or temporary employment left the building with Frank Field, the



COMMENT
ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance Editor

deposed Welfare Reform Minister?

In its current form, the Isa looks like an inferior version of its Tory tax-free predecessor, the far from perfect Peps and Tessa. It will provide reduced tax benefits for those already investing in Peps and seems unlikely to appeal to those who currently do not care to save.

While the defects of the Isa are glaring, so little is known of the stakeholder pension that it is impossible to say whether it is workable, or even if it still exists. Since the Government made it clear at the outset that encouraging us to become long-term savers would be one of its big concerns, it cannot now decide that this is too irksome an obligation. From the duo of Darling and Hewitt, we expect solutions.

Same old story

DESPITE innovations in narrative techniques, the most satisfactory type of novel still has a beginning, a middle and an end, each element

having an equal importance. The same applies to pensions, a thing that Mr Darling should remember as he applies his mind to pension reform.

When you take out a pension, you choose a plan with a mixture of low charges and good performance. During its course, you check the progress of the plan, increasing your investment as retirement approaches. Your labours do not cease when the plan matures, as you must buy an annuity, from which your pension will be paid. The wrong choice can undermine decades of painstaking work.

The obligation to buy an annuity is something that Mr Darling should examine, as this denouement of the pension story can often end in tears. Few are aware of the complex workings of this market and, as a result, do not get a good deal. Like every aspect of pensions, it is also open to abuse. Some of those who have delayed the purchase of an annuity may have fallen foul of commission-hungry salesmen and falling annuity rates

(see page 53). Another scandal brews which will lead still more people to conclude that pensions are best avoided. Perhaps like some novel readers, Mr Darling should glance at the last page of this particular story first.

Summer sport

THE vote in favour of mutualism at the Nationwide has not, it seems, caused too much mourning in the carpetbagging community. They are sizing up opportunities among the mutual insurers and taking heart from the Gilmore report, published this week. Rosalind Gilmore, a former Building Societies Commissioner, believes smaller mutuals have a vital role. But she questions whether larger building societies which are almost identical to banks, deserve mutual status.

Although Birmingham Midshires members will receive their payouts next year, times have been lean lately for other carpetbaggers. Thousands of multiple account holders are also experiencing a significant disadvantage of speculation. This is the need to obtain from societies certificates of tax deducted, so that you can enter the correct amount of interest on your self-assessment tax form.

Building society and mutual insurer bosses might wish that speculators would all just go away. But this indoor sport is proving a popular diversion in our rainy summer.

2. To talk to someone without feeling under any pressure.

personal pension

Virgin

Virgin Direct Personal Financial Service Ltd is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority. The price of units and any income from them can go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount you invest. The basis of tax may change and the tax benefit depends on personal circumstances. For your security all calls are recorded and randomly monitored.

Clare Stewart assesses the wisdom of holding a high-priced stock

BT's long-distance vision worth sharing

BT's two million shareholders have had much to cheer about in the past few months as shares in the telecom giant have romped ahead.

At the beginning of the year BT shares were hovering around the £5 mark, while this week after announcing its £6 billion alliance with American telephony group AT&T, shares were pushed over £9. Expectations of a deal with a US group have helped to keep BT shares bubbling over the past few months, and news of the AT&T alliance, which is expected to generate \$1 billion in profits in the first year and lift earnings, pushed shares 43p higher on Monday.

Last year BT hit the headlines with its planned transatlantic alliance with MCI, the second largest telecoms group in the US. But the ambitious deal was then gazzumped in a surprise move by US the group WorldCom, which out-

bid BT with a £23 billion offer. After the failure of that attempt to get into the important North American market, BT is to get a \$7 billion cashback after the sale of its 20 per cent stake in MCI.

Before news of the AT&T deal, speculation that a special dividend for shareholders or a share buyback was imminent also served to boost the BT share price. However, this week, while not ruling out the prospect of a buyback, BT directors have dampened expectations, hinting at further investment opportunities.

This week also saw first quarter figures from BT which showed pre-tax profits falling 18 per cent to £723 million. The expected fall reflected losses at a European associate company, but the results were nonetheless better than the City had forecast.

BT, as one of the earliest of the popular privatisations, first came to the stock market in 1984, with the Government

subsequently selling off the remainder of its holding in 1991 and 1993. The group has remained widely held by private investors and is the third most popular share behind the Halifax and Abbey National. Telecom shares in general have enjoyed a lively run this year with the FTSE 300 telecom index, which includes all the listed shares in the sector, reaching a record high in July.

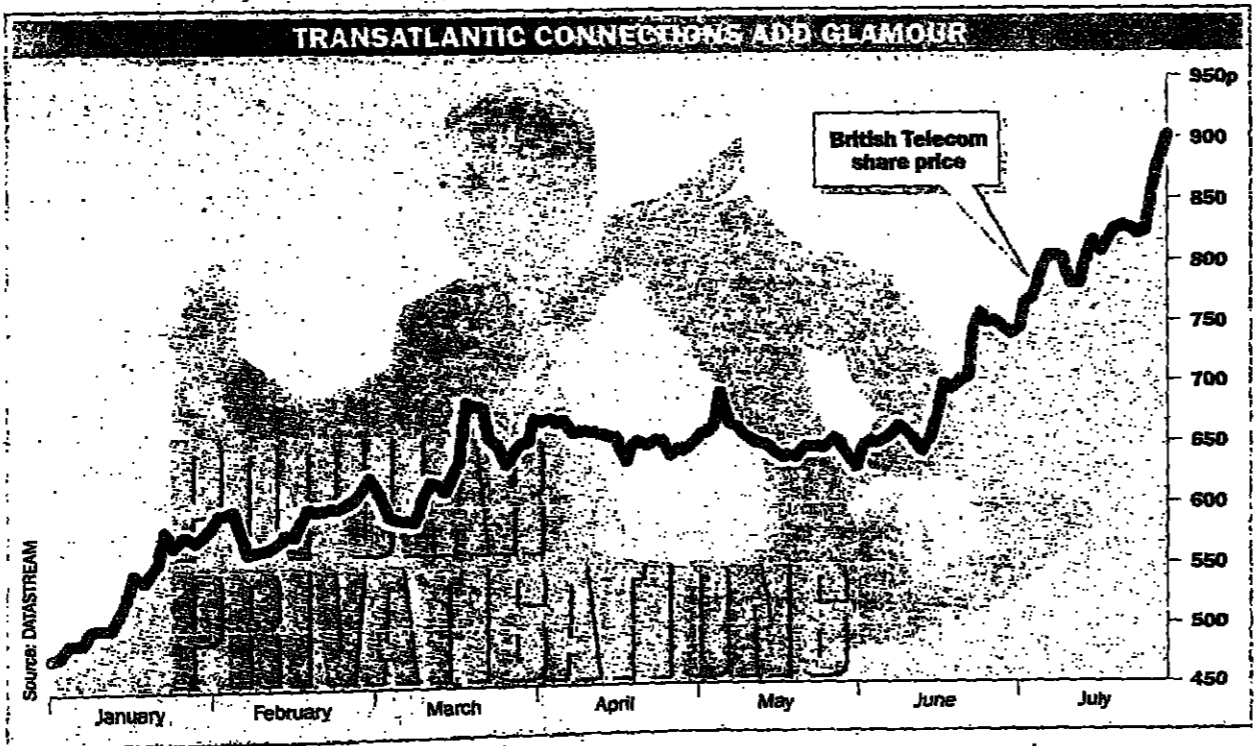
The rise in the BT share price reflects a number of factors, say analysts. BT, as a service group, so not as susceptible to the cyclical trends experienced in other sectors, is an attractive prospect for investors, particularly in a low-inflation environment where manufacturers are being squeezed.

In addition, says James Ross, a telecoms analyst at ABN Amro Hoare Govett, the broker, BT's dynamic management under Sir Peter

Boatfield, the chief executive, is highly rated.

The appeal of BT to investors has also been sustained by the flow of good news about expansion of its existing markets. This year, for example, BT says it has spent over £1 billion in developing its internet business, and by 2003 the group expects the volume of internet and other multimedia business to rival current demand for ordinary voice-based services. These currently contribute 90 per cent of BT's revenue.

At current levels, BT shares do look pricey, say analysts. The share price may retreat if the telecoms sector comes off the boil, while concerns over getting the AT&T deal past the regulatory authorities has taken some of the fizz out of the shares. But existing holders of BT shares should not be alarmed and would be wise to hold on to them, given the long-term growth prospects in view.



The new Mercury Investor's Guide - FREE

No investor should be without their free copy of the Mercury Investor's Guide. In the latest issue, you'll find:

- A 2% PEP discount offer
- Full details of Mercury's award-winning performance
- A step-by-step guide to help you make the right investment decisions
- Articles by leading financial writers on key topics, such as the introduction of ISAs.

For your FREE copy of the Mercury Investor's Guide, call us now or return the coupon.

CALL NOW 0800 0800 11

To: Brochure Requests, Mercury Investment Services Ltd, FREEPOST KE4930, London EC4B 4DD. Please send my FREE copy of the Mercury Investor's Guide.

Surname _____
First name (in full) _____ Title _____
Address _____
Postcode _____

Ref: TMGA 31/98

MERCURY
ASSET MANAGEMENT

Chelsea Investments

8.25%

UP TO 8.25%
Currently equivalent to 6.60% net p.a.

INCLUDES an ANNUAL BONUS of 2.25% gross p.a. GUARANTEED until 1st June 2000

Run by people like you, for people like you

Chelsea BUILDING SOCIETY

High interest with a GUARANTEED annual bonus

Chelsea Bonus Fifty is an excellent investment opportunity. Not only do you get an attractive variable rate of interest on investments of £5,000 and above, you can also boost your return with a FIXED annual bonus of an EXTRA 2.25% gross p.a. interest, guaranteed until 1st June 2000.

open your account and 1st June 1999 for the first annual period and between 2nd June 1999 and 1st June 2000 in the second annual period.

- Minimum investment £5,000
- Run your account from your home or office
- Freeport facilities
- Supported by Telephone Helpline Service
- Membership of the Society

If you need access to your money you can make withdrawals from your account with 50 days notice, but you will then forego your annual bonus for that period.

To qualify for your annual bonus, all we ask is that you make no withdrawals between the time you

Manage your Bonus Fifty Account the first class way - by post and phone - with Chelsea POST-tel Services.

For more information call free on the number below, quoting reference T0108

CALL FREE TODAY ON

0800 132 351

A 1st class way to manage your money - by post and phone.

Lines open 24hrs, 7 days a week. Please quote reference T0108

THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

Splitting: the differences

A useful practical guide to the legal and financial arrangements for divorce comes in the form of 'The Which? Guide to Divorce' published this week.

cent to 7.75 per cent, and the Retirement Income and Children's Savings bonds have also increased, now paying 6.65 per cent on amounts of £1,000-plus and 5.20 per cent on amounts of £500-plus, respectively. Call 0800-100 801 or visit your nearest branch for details.

A Simple Guide to Investing for Income for the Private Investor has been published by the David Aaron Partnership. It aims to help the private investor to choose suitable investments.

Abbey National has relaunched its Choices bond with increased interest rates. The one-year fixed-rate bond now pays from 7.00 per cent on a minimum investment of £1,000 up to 8.00 per cent gross on amounts of £200,000 or more.

JACQUI SPRAY

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

Table with columns: Account, Notice of term, Deposit, Rate, Interest paid. Includes Standard Life Bank and SAGA.

Table with columns: Account, Notice of term, Deposit, Rate, Interest paid. Includes Chelsea BS and Standard Life Bank.

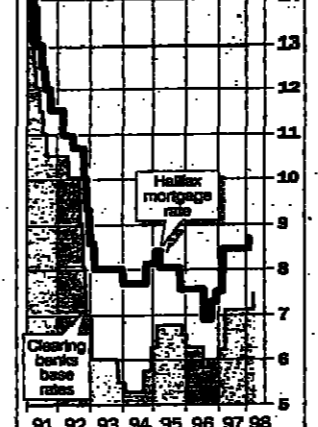
Table with columns: Account, Notice of term, Deposit, Rate, Interest paid. Includes Principality BS and Lambeth BS.

Table with columns: Card type, Interest per month, APR, Fee per annum. Includes Capital One Bank and Visa.

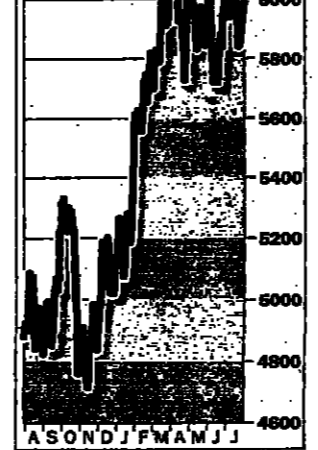
Table with columns: Personal Loans, APR, Monthly payment on £5,000 for 3yrs with insurance, no insurance. Includes Northern Rock and Yorkshire Bank.

NE, A = Minimum age 22 years, B = Operated by post or telephone, C = no interest free period, F = Fixed Rate, H = If insurance not arranged APR 12.7 per cent, N = introductory rate for a limited period, OM = interest paid on maturity, P = Operated by Post, T = Operated by Telephone.

BASE RATES V MORTGAGES



FTSE 100 PRICE INDEX



ANNUAL INCOME

Rates as at March 26, 1998

Table with columns: Investment (£), Company, Standard Rate (%). Includes GE Fin Assur, ITT London & Ed, Hambro Assured, AG Life.

FIXED RATE

Table with columns: Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max %, Notes. Includes Bank of Scotland, Northern Rock, Halifax.

PERPETUAL SUBORDINATED BONDS

Table with columns: Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max %, Notes. Includes Bank of Scotland, Halifax.

SHARE IN FOCUS: GLAXO

WELCOME - BETTER THAN EXPECTED HALF YEAR

PIBS

Table with columns: Gross coupon, Buying price, Gross yield, Issue price, Minimum purchase amount.

LARGE

Table with columns: Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max %, Notes.

SMALL

Table with columns: Lender, Interest rate, Loan size, Max %, Notes.

7.65% gross p.a.

Fixed your interest with the Bristol & West Fixed for Nine Bond. 0800 20 21 21

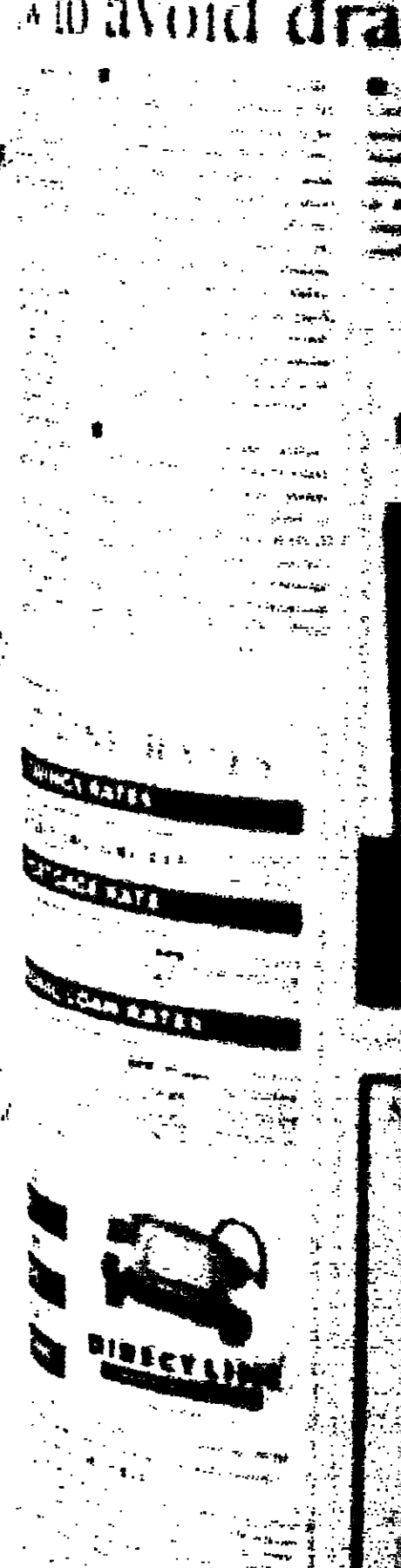
Table of financial products including ARGON LIFE ASSURANCE, ABBEY LIFE, ALLEED DUNBAR ASSURANCE, AXA EQUITY & LAW LIFE, BARCLAYS LIFE, BIRDA, BIRDA 2, BIRDA 3, BIRDA 4, BIRDA 5, BIRDA 6, BIRDA 7, BIRDA 8, BIRDA 9, BIRDA 10, BIRDA 11, BIRDA 12, BIRDA 13, BIRDA 14, BIRDA 15, BIRDA 16, BIRDA 17, BIRDA 18, BIRDA 19, BIRDA 20, BIRDA 21, BIRDA 22, BIRDA 23, BIRDA 24, BIRDA 25, BIRDA 26, BIRDA 27, BIRDA 28, BIRDA 29, BIRDA 30, BIRDA 31, BIRDA 32, BIRDA 33, BIRDA 34, BIRDA 35, BIRDA 36, BIRDA 37, BIRDA 38, BIRDA 39, BIRDA 40, BIRDA 41, BIRDA 42, BIRDA 43, BIRDA 44, BIRDA 45, BIRDA 46, BIRDA 47, BIRDA 48, BIRDA 49, BIRDA 50, BIRDA 51, BIRDA 52, BIRDA 53, BIRDA 54, BIRDA 55, BIRDA 56, BIRDA 57, BIRDA 58, BIRDA 59, BIRDA 60, BIRDA 61, BIRDA 62, BIRDA 63, BIRDA 64, BIRDA 65, BIRDA 66, BIRDA 67, BIRDA 68, BIRDA 69, BIRDA 70, BIRDA 71, BIRDA 72, BIRDA 73, BIRDA 74, BIRDA 75, BIRDA 76, BIRDA 77, BIRDA 78, BIRDA 79, BIRDA 80, BIRDA 81, BIRDA 82, BIRDA 83, BIRDA 84, BIRDA 85, BIRDA 86, BIRDA 87, BIRDA 88, BIRDA 89, BIRDA 90, BIRDA 91, BIRDA 92, BIRDA 93, BIRDA 94, BIRDA 95, BIRDA 96, BIRDA 97, BIRDA 98, BIRDA 99, BIRDA 100.

Table of financial products including BIRDA 101, BIRDA 102, BIRDA 103, BIRDA 104, BIRDA 105, BIRDA 106, BIRDA 107, BIRDA 108, BIRDA 109, BIRDA 110, BIRDA 111, BIRDA 112, BIRDA 113, BIRDA 114, BIRDA 115, BIRDA 116, BIRDA 117, BIRDA 118, BIRDA 119, BIRDA 120, BIRDA 121, BIRDA 122, BIRDA 123, BIRDA 124, BIRDA 125, BIRDA 126, BIRDA 127, BIRDA 128, BIRDA 129, BIRDA 130, BIRDA 131, BIRDA 132, BIRDA 133, BIRDA 134, BIRDA 135, BIRDA 136, BIRDA 137, BIRDA 138, BIRDA 139, BIRDA 140, BIRDA 141, BIRDA 142, BIRDA 143, BIRDA 144, BIRDA 145, BIRDA 146, BIRDA 147, BIRDA 148, BIRDA 149, BIRDA 150, BIRDA 151, BIRDA 152, BIRDA 153, BIRDA 154, BIRDA 155, BIRDA 156, BIRDA 157, BIRDA 158, BIRDA 159, BIRDA 160, BIRDA 161, BIRDA 162, BIRDA 163, BIRDA 164, BIRDA 165, BIRDA 166, BIRDA 167, BIRDA 168, BIRDA 169, BIRDA 170, BIRDA 171, BIRDA 172, BIRDA 173, BIRDA 174, BIRDA 175, BIRDA 176, BIRDA 177, BIRDA 178, BIRDA 179, BIRDA 180, BIRDA 181, BIRDA 182, BIRDA 183, BIRDA 184, BIRDA 185, BIRDA 186, BIRDA 187, BIRDA 188, BIRDA 189, BIRDA 190, BIRDA 191, BIRDA 192, BIRDA 193, BIRDA 194, BIRDA 195, BIRDA 196, BIRDA 197, BIRDA 198, BIRDA 199, BIRDA 200.

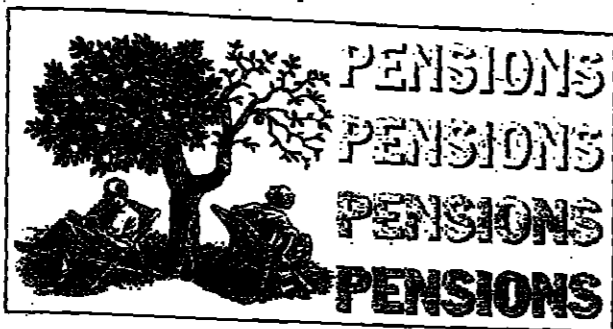
Table of financial products including BIRDA 201, BIRDA 202, BIRDA 203, BIRDA 204, BIRDA 205, BIRDA 206, BIRDA 207, BIRDA 208, BIRDA 209, BIRDA 210, BIRDA 211, BIRDA 212, BIRDA 213, BIRDA 214, BIRDA 215, BIRDA 216, BIRDA 217, BIRDA 218, BIRDA 219, BIRDA 220, BIRDA 221, BIRDA 222, BIRDA 223, BIRDA 224, BIRDA 225, BIRDA 226, BIRDA 227, BIRDA 228, BIRDA 229, BIRDA 230, BIRDA 231, BIRDA 232, BIRDA 233, BIRDA 234, BIRDA 235, BIRDA 236, BIRDA 237, BIRDA 238, BIRDA 239, BIRDA 240, BIRDA 241, BIRDA 242, BIRDA 243, BIRDA 244, BIRDA 245, BIRDA 246, BIRDA 247, BIRDA 248, BIRDA 249, BIRDA 250, BIRDA 251, BIRDA 252, BIRDA 253, BIRDA 254, BIRDA 255, BIRDA 256, BIRDA 257, BIRDA 258, BIRDA 259, BIRDA 260, BIRDA 261, BIRDA 262, BIRDA 263, BIRDA 264, BIRDA 265, BIRDA 266, BIRDA 267, BIRDA 268, BIRDA 269, BIRDA 270, BIRDA 271, BIRDA 272, BIRDA 273, BIRDA 274, BIRDA 275, BIRDA 276, BIRDA 277, BIRDA 278, BIRDA 279, BIRDA 280, BIRDA 281, BIRDA 282, BIRDA 283, BIRDA 284, BIRDA 285, BIRDA 286, BIRDA 287, BIRDA 288, BIRDA 289, BIRDA 290, BIRDA 291, BIRDA 292, BIRDA 293, BIRDA 294, BIRDA 295, BIRDA 296, BIRDA 297, BIRDA 298, BIRDA 299, BIRDA 300.

Table of financial products including BIRDA 301, BIRDA 302, BIRDA 303, BIRDA 304, BIRDA 305, BIRDA 306, BIRDA 307, BIRDA 308, BIRDA 309, BIRDA 310, BIRDA 311, BIRDA 312, BIRDA 313, BIRDA 314, BIRDA 315, BIRDA 316, BIRDA 317, BIRDA 318, BIRDA 319, BIRDA 320, BIRDA 321, BIRDA 322, BIRDA 323, BIRDA 324, BIRDA 325, BIRDA 326, BIRDA 327, BIRDA 328, BIRDA 329, BIRDA 330, BIRDA 331, BIRDA 332, BIRDA 333, BIRDA 334, BIRDA 335, BIRDA 336, BIRDA 337, BIRDA 338, BIRDA 339, BIRDA 340, BIRDA 341, BIRDA 342, BIRDA 343, BIRDA 344, BIRDA 345, BIRDA 346, BIRDA 347, BIRDA 348, BIRDA 349, BIRDA 350, BIRDA 351, BIRDA 352, BIRDA 353, BIRDA 354, BIRDA 355, BIRDA 356, BIRDA 357, BIRDA 358, BIRDA 359, BIRDA 360, BIRDA 361, BIRDA 362, BIRDA 363, BIRDA 364, BIRDA 365, BIRDA 366, BIRDA 367, BIRDA 368, BIRDA 369, BIRDA 370, BIRDA 371, BIRDA 372, BIRDA 373, BIRDA 374, BIRDA 375, BIRDA 376, BIRDA 377, BIRDA 378, BIRDA 379, BIRDA 380, BIRDA 381, BIRDA 382, BIRDA 383, BIRDA 384, BIRDA 385, BIRDA 386, BIRDA 387, BIRDA 388, BIRDA 389, BIRDA 390, BIRDA 391, BIRDA 392, BIRDA 393, BIRDA 394, BIRDA 395, BIRDA 396, BIRDA 397, BIRDA 398, BIRDA 399, BIRDA 400.

Big draw from be...



Big drawbacks emerge from being locked in



Patrick Collinson explains why a plan to ease the poor returns on annuities has backfired on investors

Three years ago the pensions industry came up with a big new idea to solve the annuity rates crisis. Instead of locking into a low annuity, pensioners were encouraged to keep their money invested in shares until annuity rates bounced back.

The new product was called income drawdown, and thousands of pensioners were persuaded to buy it.

Three years later and the industry has a problem on its hands. Shares have raced ahead — but at the same time annuity rates have tumbled, falling by 30 per cent since 1995.

A lot of drawdown plans have failed to grow at the 19 per cent per year that experts say is needed to match an annuity obtained in 1995.

Worse still, more than half of the money in drawdown plans has gone into with-profit funds, which have struggled to produce returns of more than 10 per cent per year.

"The plans invested in with-profit funds will be looking very sick. There is likely to be something of an outcry about the next pensions mis-selling scandal," said Danby Bloch of Taxbriefs, an independent financial adviser, who compiled the figures.

Once again, high commission and charges are as much at fault as poor investment returns.

Some drawdown plans pay salesmen up to 7 per cent commission, while conventional annuities pay the salesman just 1 per cent.

In other words, a £100,000 pension fund falls to £59,000 once the salesman has taken his commission, making it near impossible for the fund to

grow fast enough to match an annuity. "That extra 6 per cent is not justifiable," said Paul Tinsley of Carrington Investment Consultants, which specialises in drawdown advice. He limits his commission to just 1 per cent.

Mr Tinsley added: "I've been horrified by stories coming back to me of people paying the maximum commission who will never be able to buy an annuity of equal value in future."

Concern about an income drawdown scandal is only now surfacing because of rules which force pension companies to carry out a review of every drawdown plan on its third birthday. The first plans were sold in July 1995 and clients are only now being alerted about any possible problems.

The biggest problem is likely to be among those pensioners who chose to take the maximum income from their drawdown fund allowed under the rules set out by the Government Actuary Department. Nearly all will see their income revised downwards, many by more than 10 per cent.

Equitable Life was among the first to launch into income drawdown and the majority of its clients bought into the with-profit fund.

But Equitable Life says clients have been protected, because it does not pay commission and does not take any initial charge off the pension fund.

It gives the example of a 65-year-old man who put £100,000 into Equitable Life's with-profit fund three years ago. Now it is worth £100,827, but it has also paid out an in-



come of £9,532 per year. After the review it will increase the income level to £10,226.

A spokesman said: "Our clients should be happy. We never said drawdown was a panacea and as long as people understand the risk they are taking, there is a good story to be told about drawdown."

However, it says that clients who took the maximum income option will see their incomes fall from £11,399 to £10,385, a fall of 9 per cent.

If the 65-year old had simply ignored drawdown and bought a conventional annuity three years ago instead, he would have enjoyed a risk-free income of £8,505 per year until he dies, and would not have to fret about the possibility of a stock market collapse tomorrow.

Equitable Life admits that if a client had put all their pension money into its Far Eastern fund, then the fund would have fallen to under £50,000 and his retirement income would be slashed by half.

Nearly all pension companies now admit that using income drawdown simply as a device to beat falling annuity rates has been a mistake. This is despite the fact that the sharp fall in annuity rates between 1991 and 1994 was the principal drive behind the launch of drawdown plans in 1995.

Nonetheless, the pension companies insist that there were and there continue to be good reasons for using income drawdown rather than buying an annuity.

Death is the biggest selling point. When someone with a conventional annuity dies, then at best his or her spouse will receive about 50 per cent of the annuity income, which will then disappear altogether on the death of the spouse.

But when someone has the money in a drawdown plan, the fund is added to the estate, and can be passed on in its entirety to the surviving partner or children.

Steve Muir, marketing manager at Sun Life, said: "There's always been an understandable reluctance to lock all your

You can't open your ISA yet but you can reserve it.

The Abbey National ISA Reserve account.

Although ISAs aren't being launched until next Spring, it's easy to get a headstart with Abbey National's ISA Reserve account.

You'll benefit from attractive rates (up to 7.00% gross p.a. for balances over £5,000). Plus, when the account matures on 6th April 1999, you'll have total flexibility. If you choose to transfer any part of your balance into an Abbey National ISA, you'll receive a 0.5% gross p.a. interest bonus. Alternatively you'll have the option of investing elsewhere.

All you need is £100 to open an account (maximum investment is £7,000). And although the account will not mature until 6th April 1999, your funds will be accessible in emergencies.

We're committed to keeping our customers informed. We'll write to our ISA Reserve account holders with general and Abbey National ISA developments. Even if you don't open an ISA Reserve, this information is also available as a separate service.

For more information about the ISA Reserve or Registration Service, drop into your local branch, or call us today. Lines are open 8am to 9pm Monday to Friday, and 8am to 4pm Saturday.

0800 100 801



Savings and Investment

You may be eligible to receive interest gross. Otherwise you will be paid net of income tax at the prescribed rate. "Emergency" withdrawals will be subject to a charge equivalent to 30 days' interest (from the date of account opening if the account is less than 30 days old). ISA Reserve is a deposit account and therefore non-regulated. This account is not related to the Government's proposed Individual Savings Account (ISA) to be launched in April 1999 which is likely to be regulated. Preservation of an Abbey National ISA will depend on the final ISA regulations to be issued by the Government. Your circumstances may change before ISAs are launched and therefore ISAs may not be suitable for you. The value of tax benefits depends on your personal financial circumstances and may be affected by future changes in legislation. Please refer to the ISA Reserve and ISA Registration/Update leaflets available at any branch for further details. To assist us in improving our service, we may record or monitor telephone calls. Abbey National, Because life's complicated enough and the Umbrella Couple symbol are trademarks of Abbey National plc, Abbey House, Baker Street, London NW1 6AJ.

20 21 21 gross p.a.
The Standard & Wood Fund for Life

How to avoid drawdown pitfalls

FUND SIZE: Experts say that if your pension fund is below £100,000, you should not consider income drawdown. Some advisers, such as the Annuity Bureau, recommend a minimum fund of £250,000 before considering it.

RISK LEVEL: If you are averse to risk, and have no other assets or income other than your pension fund, drawdown is not for you. Remember, there are a range of annuity options, including with-profits and unit-linked annuities which can give you some exposure to stockmarket rises.

AGE: The age limit for drawdown is 75. For people in their early seventies it is near pointless, but for those taking early retirement in their late 50s, it may be worth it.

INVESTMENT: Argument rages in the pension industry about the correct type of investment fund for a drawdown fund. Standard Life and Winterthur ban with-profits as inappropriate for drawdown, whereas Equitable Life believes the smoothed returns reduce risk. Putting a retirement fund in a risky area such as emerging markets is inadvisable, but there is little point in leaving the fund in gilts or cash rather than an annuity.

ADVISER: Income drawdown is among the most complex areas of pension planning, especially if the plan is "phased" and split into tens of smaller individual plans. Your financial adviser should have a pensions qualification such as the CIB's PIC Pensions or the CID's G60.

COMMISSION AND CHARGES: The drawdown fund will carry initial and annual charges, which fund commission and administration of the fund. Keep charges on your fund below 1 per cent annual and 1-2 per cent initial.

CONTACTS: A free brochure explaining income drawdown is available from the Annuity Bureau by telephoning 0171-401 2040. Carrington Investment Consultants can be contacted by calling 0171-250 4360.

DIRECT LINE RATES

SAVINGS RATES	
Direct Line Instant Access Account	
8.19%	
MORTGAGE RATE	
Direct Line Standard Variable Mortgage Rate	
VARIABLE RATE	8.19%
PERSONAL LOAN RATES	
Direct Line Personal Loans	
AMOUNT OF LOAN	RATE
£4,000	8.19%
£6,000	8.19%
£16,000	8.19%

0181 647 1121 SAVINGS
0181 649 9099 MORTGAGES
0181 680 9966 PERSONAL LOANS

DIRECT LINE FINANCIAL SERVICES

Source: Direct Line Financial Services. For further information about the Direct Line products listed above, please phone the appropriate member quoting ref. NTFB05

For mortgages, security required. Direct Line mortgages from £2,000 to £20,000 are for a maximum term of 25 years and are subject to a 5% early repayment charge. For savings, the rate is the best available on the market. All rates are subject to change without notice. For personal loans, the rate is the best available on the market. All loans are subject to credit checks. Direct Line is not a financial institution and is not authorised to accept deposits. Direct Line is not a bank and does not accept deposits. Direct Line is not a bank and does not accept deposits.

WHO ARE THE LEADING FUND MANAGERS OF 1998?

Find out in our FREE 32-page guide with the August issue of Bloomberg MONEY OUT NOW £2.95

On sale at all leading newsagents
Tel: 01795 414936

Surrendering your policy?

If it's a with-profits endowment policy, there is an alternative. Neville James. We pay more.

- Top prices for suitable policies
- Prompt valuations, firm offers
- Professional, specialist staff
- 7 days a week, 8am-8pm

PLEASE CALL NOW
Tel: 01243 52 00 00
Fax: 01243 52 00 01
YOUR POLICY MUST BE AT LEAST 8 YEARS OLD

Neville James Limited.
Forum Integratis, West Pollard, Chichester, PO19 1TB
AP MM

CASHING IN YOUR ENDOWMENT?

IT'S EASY TO GET MORE
We regularly pay up to 30% MORE than the surrender value for with profits endowment and whole life policies.

Life Company Offered £16,311
Policy Portfolio Price £21,100

Don't lose out. Contact Policy Portfolio Ltd today. Registered by the Financial Services Authority

POLICY PORTFOLIO LTD
TEL: 0181 343 4567 Lines Open 24 Hours - 7 Days a Week
Godd House, Arcadia Avenue, London N3 2JU

Unwanted endowment policy? It could be a gold mine.

MISSING MILLIONS EXPOSED

Market leading prices and services with a free 48 hour quote.
London Office: 0202 83223
South West: 01753 830 822
Call today, lines always open.
Home Office & Company Limited, Fulham Road, London, SW6 5RH
AP Regulated by the FSA
NWL Investment Authority

South East: 01482 353 822
North East: 01207 239 244
Please quote 179485

Beale Dobie
Financial Services

An average annual return of 18% for 18 years.

(Well, you can hardly call it average).

SCOTTISH EASTERN

If you scan the neighbouring ads, you're likely to see some impressive looking numbers. But producing good results for a couple of years is one thing. Producing them year in year out is quite another. If you're looking for a long term investment, few can match the consistency of the Scottish Eastern Investment Trust. It is one of the largest trusts of its kind, with assets of over £1 billion invested in more than 300 companies across some 30 countries. And the good news is that you can invest in it for as little as £20 a month, through the Martin Currie Savings Plan. For more details, phone, e-mail or clip the coupon.

MARTIN CURRIE
Growing investments since 1881

facts

- An international portfolio of more than 300 companies across 30 countries
- No capital or amount charges
- Save from just £20 a month. Or invest lump sums from just £200
- And if you want tax free returns, it's available as a PEP until 5 April 1999

figures
18.5%
Average annual return since 1980

0800 132 647

martincurie@martincurie.com

COMPLETE AND POST TO:
Martin Currie,
FREEPOST, Dunoon, Argyll PA23 7UZ
Please send me details about Scottish Eastern and the Savings Plan CI and PEP CI (Please tick)
(PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS)

THE MR/Ms/Ms: (Optional)
Name
Last Name
Address
Postcode

TT010898

هكذا من الإصل

Old spice for investors

Susan Emmett on the targeting of the UK's wealthiest sector — the over-50s

Girl power may have prompted a nation of teenagers to declare their independence and invest in platform trainers, but when it comes to financial liberation, it is grey power that counts.

ing for 40 per cent of the adult population. And as the "baby boomers" of the 1945-50 and 1950s grow older, the proportion is set to rise to 50 by 2021, increasing the demand for low-risk income-generating savings products.

About 80 per cent of the £480 billion savings market is in the hands of the over-50s. Older people are not only wealthier than previous generations but know what they really want, and it's not the standard of service being offered at many of the high street banks and building societies.

The Saga account pays attractive monthly returns at 7.25 per cent on a minimum deposit of £5,000 and 7.67 per cent on £25,000. Yearly rates range from 7.5 per cent to 7.95 per cent.

Complaints about ever-changing rates and the constant restructuring of savings accounts has led Saga, the over-50s product and services provider, to introduce its own savings product, tailor-made for older savers.

The maximum limit is £1 million and the minimum additional deposit or withdrawal is £250.

Kevin Coyne, managing director of Saga Services, said: "Every month someone changes a rate somewhere. The savings market is becoming increasingly complicated with ever more ifs, buts and maybes. Older people want a simple product they can trust."

Notice account customers will be able to transfer funds into either of the new notice accounts without penalty. Instant access customers will be free to transfer into any of the new accounts.

With four million customers, Saga forecasts there will be strong demand for the new product to match the performance of the supermarkets.

Making their debut are the Access Direct, 60 Direct and Notice 60, while First Class Instant, Instant Direct and Prime 90 among others leave the stage.

More than 18 million people in Britain are over 50, account-

ing 0.5 per cent bonus.



Never been wealthier: the over-50s want hassle-free savings to enjoy their autumn years



Source: Standard & Poor's Microcap, bid to bid, net income relevant to 1/6/98. The price of investments and the income from them can go down as well as up, you may not get back as much as you invest. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. M&G do not offer advice or make any recommendations regarding investment - we only promote the packaged products and services of the M&G marketing group, issued by M&G Securities Limited (Regulated by DMO and the Personal Investment Authority). Registered Address: 3 Minster Court, Great Tower Street, London EC3R 7XH, Registered No: 90776. *The total return enjoyed by M&G Recovery Fund over 5 years to 1/6/98 was 109.7%.

117

The number of customers in the M&G Recovery Fund, which has delivered a total return of 30% over the last 12 months.

For more details call us on 0800 210 204 **M&G**

New Interest Rates From 1 August 1998

INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNT	OLD RATES		NEW RATES	
	GROSS % P.A.	NET* EQUIV. % P.A.	GROSS % P.A.	NET* EQUIV. % P.A.
£100 +	5.50	4.64	5.80	4.84
YOUNG SAVER ACCOUNT				
£10 +	5.50	4.64	5.80	4.84
MONTHLY INTEREST ACCOUNT				
£2,500 - £4,999	3.60	3.20	4.00	3.60
£5,000 - £9,999	4.60	4.00	5.00	4.00
£10,000 - £19,999	5.75	4.80	6.00	4.80
£20,000 +	6.25	5.20	6.50	5.20
PRESTIGE CHEQUE ACCOUNT				
£2,500 - £9,999	2.50	2.20	2.75	2.20
£10,000 - £19,999	3.50	3.00	3.75	3.00
£20,000 - £49,999	4.00	3.40	4.25	3.40
£50,000 +	4.50	3.80	4.75	3.80
£50,000 +	5.00	4.20	5.25	4.20
TREASURERS' CHEQUE ACCOUNT				
£100 - £2,499	1.00	0.80	1.00	0.80
£2,500 - £9,999	3.50	3.00	3.75	3.00
£10,000 - £19,999	4.50	3.80	4.75	3.80
£20,000 +	5.00	4.20	5.25	4.20
NEW TESSA				
£100 +	7.25	7.50	7.50	7.50
FOLLOW-UP TESSA				
£3,000 +	7.25	7.50	7.50	7.50
MATURED BOND PLUS				
£500 +	5.75	4.84	6.05	4.84
Tessa accounts 184, 186 (opened prior to 31/12/95)				
£100 +	6.80	7.05	7.05	7.05
90 DAY NOTICE ACCOUNT				
£2,500 - £4,999	5.50	4.40	5.80	4.64
£5,000 - £9,999	6.25	5.00	6.50	5.20
£10,000 - £19,999	6.50	5.20	6.75	5.40
£20,000 +	6.75	5.40	7.00	5.60

*Net equivalent based on current lower rate income tax at 20%.

The rates of interest paid on balances below the minimum for each of the above accounts remain unchanged. These new rates also apply to those accounts which have been linked to the Instant Access, Monthly Interest, 90 Day Notice & TESSA savings rates.



Principal Office: Portman House, Richmond Hill, Bournemouth BH2 6EP. Tel: (01202) 292444

Leave National Savings to the rich

Helen Pridham says non-taxpayers can do better

At least four million people are losing money by leaving their savings in the National Savings Investment Account. Some 1.8 million of them are children. Despite rate rises at the beginning of July which increased the basic tier of interest on the account from 4.75 to 5 per cent for amounts of between £20 and £500, savers could get more than 50 per cent extra interest elsewhere.

Nowadays, however, non-taxpayers can register with any bank or building society using Form R85 and receive all their interest with no tax deducted. Therefore, any under-18s who still have a National Savings investment account would be well advised to take their custom elsewhere.

Simon Philip, director of personal financial planning, Arthur Andersen, the accountant, says: "The only people who can really gain something from National Savings nowadays are the high-rollers - higher-rate taxpayers who can obtain tax-free returns from National Savings Certificates."

In the past, the Investment Account was the preferred choice for non-taxpayers, such as children and pensioners, because it was the only place where they could earn gross interest on their savings. Prior to April 1991, tax was deducted

at source from bank and building society interest and it could not be reclaimed. Most popular products. Rates rose on July 30 to 7.25 per cent for investments of between £2,000 and £25,000 and to 7.5 per cent for £25,000 to £250,000. However, investors with £5,000 could get a monthly income of 7.55 per cent from the Northern Rock's Save Direct Instant account, while £10,000 can get 7.75 per cent from the Legal & General Bank's 60-day account. Fixed-rate National Savings Certificates are offering a guaranteed 4.8 per cent tax-free for five years. This is equivalent to 8 per cent for a higher-rate taxpayer.

Income Bonds have long been one of National Savings'

Money Information, page 52

Savings Accounts

Up to **7.75%** gross p.a.

The 60 Day Savings Account offers:

- our RATEwatch guarantee of competitive interest rates
- tiered rates that increase as your balance grows
- penalty free access to your money with only 60 days' notice

	Annual % gross		
	£50,000	£10,000	£500
Halifax - Bonus Gold	7.15%	6.55%	-
Abbey National - High Yield Bond	6.95%	6.45%	-
Nationwide - Bonus 60	7.40%	6.80%	6.50%
Woolwich - Premier 90	6.50%	5.50%	5.40%

Call into your local Royal Bank branch for details or phone **0800 555 818** quoting ref TF37 www.rbs.co.uk

The Royal Bank of Scotland

On the 12th day of each month (or nearest business day) until at least January 2001, we will calculate an average of the rates paid on the account based upon taking the starting point of each advertised tier on our 60 Day Savings Account as the comparison point. We promise that the rate paid on each tier of the 60 Day Savings Account for the next calendar month will be higher than the calculated average rate. Calls may be recorded. These variable and correct at 21/07/98. Minimum opening balance £50. Maximum balance £1,000,000. Interest applied annually. Withdrawals subject to 60 days' written notice. Withdrawal without notice may be made subject to a charge equivalent to 60 days' interest on the amount withdrawn. Credit rate is the rate which will be paid to customers without the deduction of income tax at the appropriate rate.

The Royal Bank of Scotland plc. Registered Office: 36 St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh EH2 2YR. Registered in Scotland No. 90312.

One-Year Guaranteed Bond

UP TO **6.65% Net**

GROSS EQUIVALENT **8.64%** HURRY! LIMITED OFFER

(For comparison purposes only)

If you've got £10,000 or more to invest you can take advantage of our Guaranteed Growth Bond. Full return of your capital is guaranteed, and with a fixed growth rate at maturity of up to 6.65% net (8.64% gross equivalent), this really is an investment opportunity you can't afford to miss.

Guaranteed Bond offering:

- Up to 8.64% gross equivalent - that's 6.65% net
- Return of capital guaranteed
- Minimum investment of £10,000
- Your capital's only tied up for a year
- Very competitive fixed growth rate
- Monthly income option available
- Phone or complete the coupon for an application pack today!

Amount Invested	Annual Gross Equivalent	Annual Net
£30,000 +	8.64%	6.65%
£25,000 to £49,999	8.57%	6.60%
£10,000 to £24,999	8.51%	6.55%

MONTHLY INCOME OPTION

£10,000 +	8.10%	6.24%
-----------	-------	-------

Call Now On **0800 555 889**

Lines open every day (including Saturday and Sunday) 9am-5pm or if you prefer, simply complete the coupon opposite.

PLEASE SEND ME AN APPLICATION FOR THE ONE-YEAR GUARANTEED BOND (complete in BLOCK CAPITALS please)

Title (Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms) First Name _____

Surname _____

Address _____

County _____ Postcode _____

Tel (Day) _____ (Evening) _____

(Inc. STD Code)

ONCE COMPLETED, RETURN TO: Skipton Financial Services Limited, FREEPOST, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 1JR

You want to know exactly how much you're worth. What do you consult?

(a) Your horoscopes
(b) Your tea-leaves
(c) Madame Zara's tarot cards
(d) Your Virgin One bank statement

With a Virgin One account, everything from your mortgage to your current account is in one place. One statement each month sets out what you owe against how much you owe. So it pays you to know where you belong. In charge of your money.

If you have, or are about to buy, a home with a mortgage of at least £50,000, then give us a call on 08456 00 00 01 to find out if we're right for you. The Virgin One account. It's no small change.

The Virgin One account is a secured personal bank account with The Royal Bank of Scotland plc.

one account
08456 00 00 01
personal financial service

Open 7 Days a week, 9am-5pm

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT. You can phone for further information or a written quotation at any time. You must be aged 18 or over. Life Insurance is required. For your security all calls are recorded and randomly monitored. The Virgin One account is not currently available in Northern Ireland. Virgin Direct Personal Finance Ltd, Discovery House, Whiting Rd, Norwich, NR4 6JZ.

Cashing in endowment no tea

23.4%

FREE

Financial

THE TIMES SATURDAY AUGUST 1 1998

Gavin Lumsden explains why an easy option could be expensive

Cash-strapped investors lose an estimated £60 million each year because they surrender their with-profits endowments back to their insurers rather than selling the policies in the second-hand market.



complain that insurers are not doing enough to make policyholders aware that the traded endowment market exists. Neville James, a market-maker in Chichester, believes investors wrongly surrender £600 million worth of policies each year because they do not know of an alternative.

Cashing in an endowment is no tea party

These are essentially investments with a bit of life insurance thrown in. Traditionally, they have been popular with cautious investors looking to build up sizeable sums of money over ten to 25 years. Frequently the money is used to pay off mortgages.

have become popular as good-value investments because they do not carry the high charges that insurers levy in an endowment's early years.

To be a successful Tep investor you either need good advice or a thorough knowledge of the historic bonus behaviour of individual insurers. Few have this expertise. It can be easier simply to invest in the small number of funds which invest exclusively in Teps. These are run by BZW, Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, Neville James and Scottish Value Management.

Schroder UK Growth Fund plc. EXCEPTIONAL UK GROWTH. Top Performing UK Capital Growth Investment Trust. 100% growth in under five years. Since Schroder UK Growth Fund plc was launched in 1994, it has been the best performing investment trust in the UK Capital Growth sector.

New Rates for Investors. Variable investment rates from 1 August 1998. These attractive investment rates demonstrate our continued commitment, as a mutual building society, to putting our customers' best interests first. Includes tables for 1 Year Notice Account, 180 Day Notice Account, 90 Day Notice Account, 30 Day Notice Account, Premium Deposit Account, Regular Savers Account, Acorn Savings Account, Albion Premier Saver Account, Century Saver Account, Community Account, Combined Portfolio Account, Base Rate Tracker Account, and Tessa Follow-up Tessa.

Singer & Friedlander. TAX FREE PEP BENEFITS PROTECTED BY THE BUDGET. Continental PEP. 23.4% p.a. *£6,000 PEP'ed into the Singer & Friedlander Continental Trust on 01/6/99 would have risen to £17,209 by 01/6/98 - an average annual growth of 23.4%. Includes a line graph showing growth from £7,000 to £17,000 and contact information for Singer & Friedlander.

55 818. The Royal Bank of Scotland. Includes a large percentage sign and the bank's logo.



MANDY MYSTERY 50

Graham Searjeant on the Wessex Water takeover

WEEKEND MONEY

GREY POWER 54

Special savings account for the silver set



Now mutuals feel the heat

Marianne Curphey reports on this summer's latest sport — carpetbagging mutual insurance companies for a windfall



Forget lounging about in Barbados — take up carpetbagging instead

Carpetbagging has become "this year's summer sport" preferred by some of the pleasures of the beach as investors with time on their hands look for the next windfall opportunity.

The banking and financial services stocks has also meant that acquiring a mutual would be very expensive. A downturn in the stock market would therefore leave mutuals vulnerable.

about 5 per cent in total. Many mutuals have withdrawn some products to deter carpetbaggers, but Equitable Life has a bond with a minimum single premium of £500.

One area where consolidation has been expected — but which has yet to happen — is the mutual insurance sector. Rapid consolidation in the UK insurance industry and the prospect of a correction in the stock market could trigger a wave of takeovers among mutual insurers.

Patrick Connolly of Chartwell Investment Management, a Bath IFA, wrote a Carpetbaggers' Guide to Life Companies last year. He said: "We are seeing a large increase in demand for savings products from those mutuals we believe are most likely to be taken over."

Mr Connolly believes Standard Life is unlikely to demutualise in the near future. "If any mutual company is strong enough to survive, it is Standard Life. Scottish Life, NPI and Friends Provident, however, who are the most attractive to predators, will struggle to remain independent because they do not have the huge advertising budget and each piece of business costs them more to process."

The Government plans for the individual savings account (Isa) were thrown into some disarray this week following the revelation that Sainsbury's and Tesco did not think they could offer the schemes cost-effectively.

No interest in the new savings plan

investment limit of £5,000, of which £1,000 can be invested in life insurance. £1,000 can be put into cash, while £3,000 can be put into unit trusts, investment trusts or stocks and shares.

standard. Isas that get the Cat standard will have to fulfil certain criteria on cost, accessibility and terms. It will still be possible to offer Isas that do not match the standard, but they will be difficult to sell to unsophisticated savers — the target market of the Government and retailers.

computer and administration systems to handle what is likely to be small amounts that savers can withdraw at any time. Philip Warland, the director-general of the Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds (Autif), believes that Isas will appeal only to those who already hold Peps, as only the existing providers will be able to offer the product.

Missing that Miras touch

THE removal of multiple mortgage interest relief at source (Miras) ten years ago today helped to bring to an end the Eighties housing boom, and played a role in the creation of one of the era's most enduring phrases — negative equity.



benefiting from multiple Miras. For others, buying a property together before the August 1988 deadline was a decision that they lived to regret but could not easily reverse when the subsequent decline in house prices left them mired in negative equity, with loans greater than the value of their properties.

of the year, I Should Be So Lucky in Love, was changed by some disenchanted homebuyers to I Should Be So Lucky To Sell. The Lawson reform was the first of a series of reductions in the value of Miras. In 1983, when the limit was raised from £25,000 to £30,000, Halifax data shows that the average house price was £29,500 and the average loan was £18,000. At that time, the relief was available at the higher rate of tax. Today the limit remains at £30,000 but the average house price has risen to £71,500 while the average new loan is £50,000.

Higher rate relief was abolished in 1991. In the 1993 March Budget, the rate of the relief was reduced from 25 per cent to 20 per cent, with another 5 per cent decrease to 15 per cent in the November Budget. In April this year Miras was further diminished to 10 per cent. Few expect the relief to see out the century.

Kylie Minogue: song words switched to suit the times

benefiting from multiple Miras. For others, buying a property together before the August 1988 deadline was a decision that they lived to regret but could not easily reverse when the subsequent decline in house prices left them mired in negative equity, with loans greater than the value of their properties.

of the year, I Should Be So Lucky in Love, was changed by some disenchanted homebuyers to I Should Be So Lucky To Sell. The Lawson reform was the first of a series of reductions in the value of Miras. In 1983, when the limit was raised from £25,000 to £30,000, Halifax data shows that the average house price was £29,500 and the average loan was £18,000. At that time, the relief was available at the higher rate of tax. Today the limit remains at £30,000 but the average house price has risen to £71,500 while the average new loan is £50,000.

Higher rate relief was abolished in 1991. In the 1993 March Budget, the rate of the relief was reduced from 25 per cent to 20 per cent, with another 5 per cent decrease to 15 per cent in the November Budget. In April this year Miras was further diminished to 10 per cent. Few expect the relief to see out the century.

ANNE ASHWORTH

Manek Growth Fund and PEP advertisement. Features a portrait of a man and lists key statistics: Up 18.4% in six months since launch, sector average up 10.1%; 8th out of 158 in UK Growth Sector; £120m under management. Includes a coupon for a brochure.

Source: Reuters. Windlight, offer to bid, net income estimated, 16.1297 to 16.6598. **As at 16.6.98. Investments in the Manek Growth Fund, an Authorised unit trust, should be made only on the basis of the prospectus and key features documents which may be obtained from Manek Investment Management Limited, PO Box 17777, London EC3V 9NA. Please remember that the value of an investment in a unit trust and the income from it may go down as well as up. It may be affected by exchange rate variations, and you may not get back the amount invested. From 6 April 1998 investments can be made in the new Individual Savings Account (ISA). All existing PEPs at that time may continue to be held with the same tax advantages as an ISA. Current tax levels and reliefs may change and their value will depend on your individual circumstances. Best performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance and you should regard an investment in a unit trust as a medium to long term investment. Manek Investment Management Limited is regulated by IMA and the Personal Investment Authority.

INSIDE MONEY MANAGEMENT section. Includes articles: 51 Anne Ashworth on the outlook for carpetbaggers; 46 Why a used model makes financial sense; 49 The ending of the small company dream; 53 Annuity delay — the latest pension scandal. Also includes BUSINESS NEWS pages 22-27 and WEEKEND MONEY edited by Anne Ashworth.

olding t... puttin... (Large vertical text on the right edge of the page)

SHOPPING



Oswald Boateng, back on his feet after bankruptcy

Page 4

FASHION



Decked out: lean and mean cuts for Cowes Week

Page 5

PETS



Budgies behind bars: Britain's favourite jail birds

Page 19

TRAVEL



The nearer, the dearer: why it's cheaper to long haul

Page 33

THE TIMES

WEEKEND

SATURDAY AUGUST 1 1998

Britain protects it but Iceland eats it: life and death for a puffin

Richard Middleton goes puffin hunting but has trouble going in for the kill

For those who have read and enjoyed James and the Giant Peach, The Railway Children or other books in the Puffin range, this may make uncomfortable reading. Ornithologists and animal lovers who treasure the clown's beak, smiling eyes and barrelled body of a puffin might prefer to turn to the next page. My story concerns a bird more popular than almost any other, a children's favourite courtesy of its looks and of Kaye Webb, who founded the Puffin book club in 1967. In Britain, where I lived until recently, the bird is protected by law. In Reykjavik, my new home, the puffin is part of the staple diet. So it was that we found ourselves stopping for a rest on the way up to the summit of Vigur in northwest Iceland, my father-in-law, Sigurður Bjarnason, and I. The puffins, poking their heads out of burrows just feet away, Sigurður observed kindly. When he was a younger Vigurungur, as those born on this tiny island are called, he might have been looking to hunt the birds for food. "On good days, when the wind was right, I used to be able to

Continued on page 3



BRUCE COLEMAN

SHOPPING... 12-16 FAITH... 37 TRAVEL... 23-33 GAMES... 35,36



JOB satisfaction

escape with Hertz from only £13 a day*

When you're looking for a break from your daily routine, just rent a car from Hertz and experience that extra sense of freedom. And, if you see a cheaper weekly prepaid price for an identical rental from any other international car rental company, we promise to match it. Call your travel agent or Hertz 24 hours a day on:

Table with 2 columns: Country and Price per week. Includes Spain (Canaries), Spain (Malaga), Malta, Portugal, Greece, Florida, California, and Israel.

0990 90 60 90



*From 17/98 to 21/8/98 for the smallest car category... Prices are for weekly high season rentals... Subject to availability by country. Prices are for weekly high season rentals, from 17/98 to 21/8/98 for the smallest car category... Subject to availability by country. Prices are for weekly high season rentals, from 17/98 to 21/8/98 for the smallest car category... Subject to availability by country.



Writer and journalist William Shawcross and his wife, Olga Polizzi, on their yacht *Pinuccia*, which, contrary to popular belief, was not once owned by Mussolini — a fanciful story put out by the boat's former owner

Building empires in the sun

The Forte and Shawcross families have set up camp on the shores of Cornwall. Ginny Dougary joined them

Olga Polizzi, the hotelier daughter of Lord Forte, and her husband, the writer and journalist William Shawcross, are in danger of turning into one another. Five years after their wedding, she is supposed to be writing a book (about the Granada takeover of the Forte group two years ago), and he has become so accustomed to waiting on tables at his wife's new hotel in Cornwall that he is thinking of changing the occupation in his passport. "From writer to waiter," he muses. "It's only a letter, after all." That said, there cannot be many writers with whom one could discuss the bombing of Cambodia (the subject of his best-known book, *Sideshow*) or the role of the modern United Nations (his current project).

Here on *Pinuccia* — a 48ft mahogany racing yacht — the roles are restored. Olga is a keen sailor, in the sense that she enjoys lolling in the sun while someone else does the sailing. But at least she is able to tell her port from her starboard, can refer unflinchingly to a boat as a "she" and when the skipper, Alan Hardy, shouts out some incomprehensible nautical instruction — reeling in a jib? — Olga leaps to her feet and firmly hooks a recalcitrant rope back into place. "She's a good little seamstress," the skipper murmurs approvingly. "Seaperson, I suppose I should say," catching her look.

William and his 21-year-old old art student son Conrad (from Shawcross's first marriage to fellow writer Marina Warner) are doing all the work. It does seem to take a fearful long time to get to the fun bit of sailing. Once you have managed to clamber on board, without falling into the

freezing sea, it is all hands on deck — unhooking bits of nylon string and attempting to synchronise the unfurling of gigantic sails. There is so little wind that we are obliged to motor out towards Falmouth harbour before Conrad and his father, hanging perilously off the side of the boat, put all their combined weight into hoisting up the main sail.

And, at last, we are off. Not exactly racing but moving at some speed: the boat tilting thrillingly into the water, as we pass the lighthouse of St Anthony's and make for some other bit of shoreline. It is my job to steer, which shows to what lengths Olga and Willie are prepared to go to please the guests of the hotel. She is a very expensive boat and I cannot even drive a car.

It may not be a writer's job to let the facts get in the way of a good story, but it is a journalist's. So, despite newspaper accounts to the contrary, I have to report that there is no truth in the stories that *Pinuccia* was once owned by Mussolini. The Fascist connection was part of the fanciful sales pitch by the boat's former owner, a member of a Dutch syndicate. His version was that Mussolini commissioned the yacht to represent Italy at the World Cup in 1938. *Pinuccia* was apparently Benito's pillow talk name for his mistress — about as cute as owning a boat called *Little Eva*.

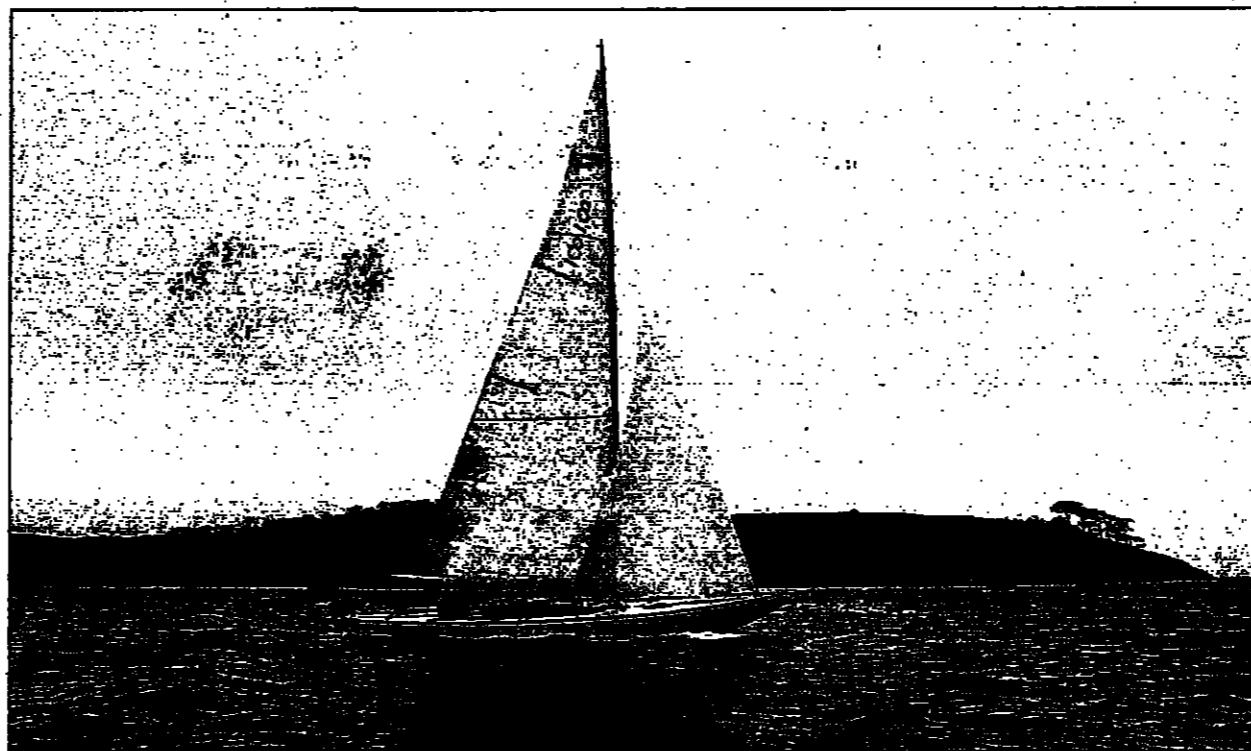
William, being a bit of a fact man and presumably not entirely comfortable with the dictator angle, decided to investigate. The rather less colourful truth was that the boat was designed and built for a leading Italian publisher, Angelo Rizzoli, who named it after his daughter, Mussolini, it transpires, loathed the sea and had no interest whatsoever in sailing. Which does not stop some

members of the Polizzi-Shawcross clan finding the alleged connection funny. The boat's compass is a rather fine Art Deco number made in Germany. "Probably a present from Adolf to his Italian mate," Conrad says, deadpan.

William has been messing about on boats since he was a small boy. Like his father, 96-year-old Lord Shawcross, chief British prosecutor at the Nuremberg Trials, "sailing" is listed as one of his recreations in *Who's Who*. He shows me a photograph of himself, aged about five, on a yacht with his father. Willie has spent every summer since he can remember in this pretty village of St Mawes, with its clotted-cream and strawberry-pink cottages, telescope in each front window, pebbly beach, and a sweep of water dotted with boats in every direction at the end of the Roseland peninsula.

He has particularly fond memories of the Hotel Tresanton, which was a creation of his godfather, Jack Silley, whom he describes as a "buccaneering businessman" — a successful one since he owned the Falmouth docks — as a place for his sailing chums to stay. That was in the late 1940s, but the hotel's heyday when it boasted (discreetly, one presumes) the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret among its clientele was a decade or so later.

There is something ineffably depressing about a once-glorious hotel which has fallen on hard times; by the 1980s, after a succession of different owners, the Tresanton, with its grey breeze-block annex, and Olga is famously stylish with a slightly unusual retro twist. And I do not imagine there can be many former



Pinuccia, a 48ft mahogany racing yacht moored in Falmouth harbour, has a fine German-made Art Deco compass



Olga Polizzi on the terrace outside their hotel, Tresanton, which she has restored from a sadly run-down state

and taste-free decline. It was crying out to be rescued but no buyer appeared sufficiently well funded to take it on.

Olga and Willie were introduced to each other in the late 1980s by a mutual friend who, I am reliably informed, thought they were ideally suited because they were both hippies at heart. They certainly do not look like hippies: Willie wears loafers and navy suits, and Olga is famously stylish with a slightly unusual retro twist. And I do not imagine there can be many former

hippies, Richard Branson notwithstanding, who are fans of Margaret Thatcher (Olga) or who could write a not-unkind biography of Rupert Murdoch (Willie). But they do have a relaxed, slightly bohemian edge to them. I asked Olga whether she thought the description once fitted. "Only slightly," she says. "Reading Bertrand Russell and doing the Aldermaston thing. My father, of course, didn't like that at all."

When I put the same question to William, he insists that he was not. "Oh, you were, darling," Olga jumps in. "You're an ageing hippy now." A great shriek of laughter.

Olga appears to have spent much of her life in the shadow of two strong men: first her father, who still disapproves of women who wear trousers, in both senses (his daughter rarely wears anything else), and then her brother, Rocco, who is busily rebuilding the Forte empire — with hotels in Florence, Rome, Edinburgh, Cardiff — and clamouring to get his baby sister back on board to kit them out. (Her role at

Forté was director of building and design.)

I wonder who was the more frightening of the two formidable fathers: Lord Shawcross or Lord Forte. William, who like most journalists cannot stand being interviewed himself, is tight-lipped. Olga, fortunately, is not. "When I first met William, his father was always telling him to get his hair cut and wear a tie (this to a twice-married middle-aged man). He was always terribly smart and precise himself. I think he did it on purpose, to get at

William," she laughs. "We were frightened of my father, but he was incredibly loving. Probably more obviously so than yours," she looks at William. "But Hartley adores you. My father is just a much more huggy type. 'Come and give me a kiss' and all that."

"Walking" is Willie's other recreation, and I am slightly surprised to discover that it is also a passion of Olga's. Early on in their relationship, they would go on seven or eight-mile hikes around Cornwall. Olga weighed down with her rucksack containing tins of baked beans (William's favourite food) and a hairdryer. Surely the daughter of the man who owned the *George V* in Paris could stay in the sort of hotels which provided such basics? "Not the hotels William likes to pick," she says ruefully. "The only time I really minded was when we had to boot the owner's dogs off our bed before we could get in."

The Tresanton, you can rest assured, is not that sort of hotel. Olga fell in love with Willie and, by extension, the place of his childhood. Eighteen months ago she bought it. The couple and their various children and children's friends have been living in Lord Shawcross's summer house, next to the hotel, which had been used as an over-spill for guests. I wonder just who is indulging whom here? The answer is a bit of both. It obviously makes Olga happy — if she can ever snatch a moment to remember why she did it — to bring back to life somewhere to which her husband had obviously been so attached. William, in turn, felt it was important for her to create something in her own imprint, free from corporate dictates and interference.

What she has achieved is far removed from the draughty hotels, with their damp candlewick bedsprings, which I remember from the Cornish holidays of my childhood. Every detail, from the seagrass matting to the modern sculptures and antique chests, the pale linen curtains to the plumpest pillows imaginable — has been handpicked by Olga. Even the door hinges look like bamboo dipped in some precious metal. This is not a brochure, but it is hard to imagine a British seaside hotel which combines comfort and unassuming elegance to such enjoyable effect. And if one of life's pleasures is seeing the well-off with their sleeves rolled up — Lord Shawcross's son carrying your bags, Lord Forte's daughter ironing your shirts when she is short-staffed, her two daughters sloping away in the kitchen for 12 hours at a stretch — then this is definitely the place to be.



Handwritten signatures and notes at the bottom right of the page, including the name 'Ginny Dougary' and other illegible scribbles.

Anne Robinson



● I COVERED my first rotten package-holiday story as a young reporter on *The Sunday Times*. A tour operator, long since gone under, sent customers to an un-speakably filthy hotel in Portugal, with food to match, and refused to acknowledge there was a problem.

Thirty years on, it's still a familiar tale. If you want to take on a holiday company your options are limited. You can present your grievance to the small claims court or seek arbitration via ABTA, the Association of British Travel Agents.

Neither process is speedy, though ABTA's has improved. But what people want is their room changed that night. The sea view they paid for. Not a cheque and a letter saying sorry six months later.

Often there is no compensation because while the short-changed holiday maker may come home determinedly cross, most run out of steam.

So what *Watchdog* relentlessly

breathes down the necks of tour operators is to offer immediate action. Fast, pronto, on the spot, there and then.

And it's therefore a shock to find a journalist from *The Daily Telegraph* ringing up and in an alarmingly accusatory manner demanding to know why I had refused to join discussions with the Consumer Affairs Minister and the travel industry about the appointment of an ombudsman.

I feel like someone discovered beating and starving her invalid granny just for the hell of it. But why should I help with pointless political window dressing? In other words, for "travel ombudsman" read "chocolate teapot".

● NO MATTER, in the Cabinet reshuffle the Consumer Affairs Minister whose genius was behind the travel ombudsman lark returned to the backbenches.

Nobody could accuse Nigel Griffiths of overworking his spin

doctors. His only notable foray into PR was to be filmed in a yellow hard hat climbing a ladder while warning us to be mindful of safety if we are doing jobs around the home.

Something, as the *WJ Notes* in our village magazine frequently and politely says when reporting an interesting talk its members have received, we all found most helpful.

● WHAT ADVICE for the new Minister? For a start he should forget about consulting the industry and start talking to people. Frustrated consumers who find there is no redress when a new car goes wrong. Or when a house sale ends in tears.

The answer is there is nowhere else to go. Certainly not to lawyers.

If he doesn't believe me, I offer him the example of my Gloucestershire neighbour Bernard, an ultra-smart city solicitor.

When Bernard first moved to the country, when someone was in the middle of a legal wrangle, particularly over work on their house, in a spirit of friendliness he

would willy-nilly offer "to look at the papers".

Not any more. He has learned that in man-hours it's cheaper to say: "Give me your builder's bill and I'll pay it."

● OUR BAROMETERS of middle England on *Watchdog* are the Ladies of Bearwood Lakes Golf Club, a quartet with 200 years of shopping experience between them.

One of them, Pauline, invited us to Wokingham Theatre to see an amateur production of *Daisy Pulls It Off*. Pauline had directed it. And I have walked out of the very same play when it was in the West End ten years ago. (Penrose suggested in view of this I should maybe just go for the second half.)

Anyway, I am very glad we went for the whole. It was a gloriously wonderful evening. How can an amateur theatre - tickets a fiver, everyone who wants one given a part - stage a production that

keeps you on the edge of your seat and roaring with laughter? Does enthusiasm make up for professionalism? No. It was enthusiastic and professional.

The theatre, purpose-built a decade ago, has now paid for itself. Should it expand? I fear not. It should merely volunteer its members to help Gerry Robinson run the Arts Council.

● MEANWHILE, a sad day for Cirencester. Charlie Barnett's has closed. The name, as any cricket enthusiast knows, belongs to the pre-war Gloucestershire star.

His fish shop opened in 1936. Weeks later he was picked to tour Australia.

His father insisted he went. But when not playing cricket, Charlie was at the counter clearing the ood and weighing the lobsters. Now his son John is retiring.

These days, of course, sports stars don't become shop keepers, they just nick the best media jobs.



All about puffins

Puffins are not an endangered species. Even if a few thousand are curried and eaten every year in Iceland. No one knows how many there are in the world, but we do know there are a vast number. Most are found in Iceland and Norway, where they often breed in colonies on the tops of inaccessible cliffs or on islands with no landing place. Those offer the kind of safe homes that they like - but it makes them difficult to count.

Some people, as Richard Middleton says, believe there are ten million puffins - that is to say, about five million breeding pairs - in Iceland in the summer. The new Atlas of European Breeding Birds is more cautious, and puts the total of breeding pairs in Iceland at two to three million - but the locals may be nearer the truth. In Norway there are apparently two million pairs, and the other two main breeding areas are the Faeroes and the British Isles, with about half a million pairs each. They are a protected species, like most other birds. In Britain, but you can see why the Icelanders feel they can spare a few.

In Britain, the largest colony is found on the archipelago of St Kilda, far out to sea off the west coast of Scotland. The Scottish National Trust organises expeditions to St Kilda (where you can also see the largest gannet colony in the world) - otherwise it is not easy to get there. There are many other puffin colonies on islands and cliffs around the Scottish coast, and a few in England and Wales. There are also 30 or so small colonies in Ireland, with most of the birds on the Kerry Islands.

However, you will have to hurry if you want to see puffins on land and in their gaudy breeding dress this year. Most of them are feeding large chicks in their burrows by now, or have finished nesting. In August they start to lose their red eye-rings, their colourful beak ornamentation and their smart black jackets. Soon after that the whole colony heads out to sea, where they will remain for the winter.

Their numbers seem at present to be steady in Britain. Their main enemies are the greater black-backed gulls, which can catch them on the wing. Peregrine falcons also drop down on them, but there are too few of those to be a threat (unlike the gyrfalcons in Iceland).

They are very engaging birds, with their jaunty walk and their way of peeping out of their burrows, and have recently been voted the most popular British bird, though I rather think that most of the voters have only seen them on television. In their much browner winter plumage, they are often observed out at sea by fishermen. They do not go for long distances out into the ocean, but usually they are too far off in winter to be seen from the shore.

If you miss them this summer, there will be plenty around again next spring - as early as March on the east coast of Scotland - wheeling in from the sea, then scurrying round cleaning out their burrows for another long breeding season ahead.

Continued from page 1
catch about 100 puffins an hour," said Sigurður, a former Icelandic ambassador to London. "My brother, Björn, was extremely skilled. He set a record which still stands on Vigur, if not Iceland: 1,147 birds in six hours."

"Puffin hunts, or *lundaveiði*, have a tradition in Iceland stretching back centuries. As late as the 1920s, the majority of Icelanders suffered hardship and poverty and ate anything they could catch, allowing no part of the animal to waste. While cod's heads are rarely eaten, Icelanders today still enjoy shark and whale meat, seal flippers, soured rams' testicles and puffin, smoked or cooked.

Cormorant is savoured too, a taste acquired by Sir Andrew Gilchrist, British ambassador to Reykjavik during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Yet, as Sir Andrew describes in his 1978 memoir, *Cod Wars and How to Lose Them*, their preparation was "without great success: it made the whole house stink and nearly brought about the resignation of our invaluable cook".

The puffins consumed in Iceland number a few tens of thousands from the estimated ten million that arrive each year to breed. Colonies are found in coastal areas and islands such as Vigur and those in Breiðafjörður fjord, but are concentrated in the Vestmannaeyjar or Westman Islands, whose feisty inhabitants regard themselves as separatist Icelandic nationals.

The six-week hunting season culminates this weekend with the *Tjúkshátíð*, the national feast of the Vestmannaeyjar. This is an annual festival held every summer bank holiday when hundreds of tents are erected and smoked or boiled puffins are served. So far, 1998 has seen a good season, with reports indicating that the catch may well double the total of 50-60,000 birds netted last year.

The numbers for Vigur's annual catch rarely exceed 7,000, although the island is home to more than 150,000 puffins during the summer. Meaning "a spear" in English, Vigur is set deep inside the majestic *Ísafjörður* fjord and is 2km long and 300 metres wide.

Sigurður was born here in 1915 and remembers his grandfather, also an MP, but also a Lutheran priest. Today it is the fourth generation that runs the only farm. It has dairy cows and sheep and tourists arrive by boat to admire Iceland's oldest working windmill and enjoy farmhouse high teas. About 3,000 pairs of eider ducks provide down for continental quilts, which retail at about £800 for a single quilt.

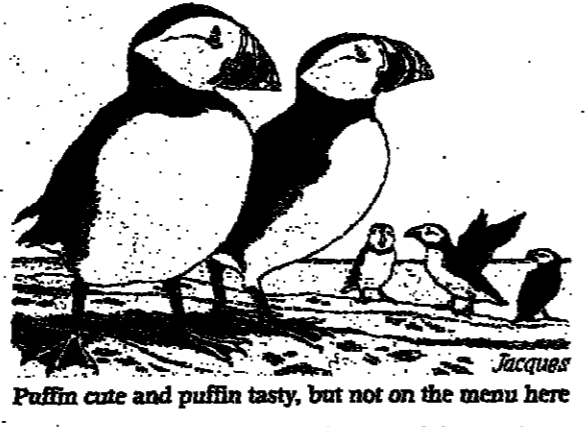
Vigur points north towards the *Snaefellsstönd*, which translates as snowy mountain coastline, with the saucer-shaped *Drangajökull* glacier to the east. About 20 other

THE GOURMET VERDICT

Long a staple of the Icelandic diet, puffin is imported as a delicacy to other Scandinavian countries, although not, as far as I know, to Britain. I first encountered it smoked, in Sweden - a plump lean meat of purple-reddish hue with a distinctive flavour, something like a cross between pigeon and liver, and surprisingly unfishy. The texture of the breast is rather resilient, like grouse, and is improved by sharpening the sauce with a sweetish wine vinegar, or by serving the meat with a fruit accompaniment such as spiced figs, pears or wild

berries. Though the puffin has just been predictably voted Britons' favourite seabird by readers of a birdwatching magazine, there is nothing stranger about eating it than other avian delicacies such as wild duck (widgeon and teal are just as colourful), woodcock, snipe, grouse or partridge. Puffin is a sort of grouse of the sea. I loved watching them off the north Cornish coast as a boy, and sadly miss them now they have almost disappeared. But if the opportunity arose I would certainly relish eating them again, too.

ROBIN YOUNG



Puffin cute and puffin tasty, but not on the menu here

species of breeding birds arrive with the puffins and eiders. I saw Arctic tern, redshank, white wagtail and black guillemot. The latter, friendly, housewife birds, cohabited beneath the summer house where we were staying.

Overhanging my visit it was the thought that perhaps I was destined to hunt puffin. The thread had started two years ago when a gossip item in a newspaper referred to me indirectly as an Icelandic puffin farmer. At a lunch hosted by the *Oldie* magazine, my wife, Hildur Helga, found herself seated in the midst of an all-male group, including Jeremy Paxman and the late John Wells. Mr Paxman had just been to Iceland for the first time and informed my wife that he was determined to sample puffin on his next trip.

Perhaps mischief-making among the chaps, Hildur Helga introduced the subject of "puffin strangling", a translation for *lundaveiði*. Mr Paxman grew more excited as details emerged and Wells, goading him on, later tipped off a reporter. The story, repeated by other papers, mocked Paxman for his supposed unwhole-some interest in strangulating innocent seabirds. Hildur Helga was then chief London correspondent for Icelandic National Broadcasting and fea-

nured as the "wife of an Icelandic puffin farmer". I looked anything but a puffin farmer, if such a thing exists, in my townee imitation leather jacket and brand new moleskin trousers, as I set off one afternoon with Snorri Salvársson, Sigurður's 16-year-old great nephew, on a *lundaveiði*. He lent me some tracksuit trousers which I slipped on over the moleskins to protect them from bird droppings.

The conditions were good: a strong southerly wind was blowing, which meant that the birds would probably be flying. Puffins are clumsy in the air, and because of their poor aerodynamics, need a strong breeze to be able to stay aloft.

Our equipment consisted of an old grain sack for the catch and a 5m-long fibre pole forked at the top with a net, looking rather like a giant lacrosse stick. Carried on the shoulder, this pole was to prove a useful foil against the Arctic terns which screamed, and dived like Messerschmitts at my head, if I dared to walk too close to their nests.



Puffin hunting on Vigur. Hunters use a net to catch the birds as they circle the cliffs and then pull them in for the pot

ground. These tunnels all have separate chambers - puffins are unusually clean birds - used for latrines.

Out to sea, the birds lazed on the waves while others flew around in circles. Their aim is to try to confuse predators such as gyrfalcons, one of which had its eyrie on the Ógurness peninsula across the water. Snorri emphasised that birds returning to the burrows with sprats in their beaks must not be hunted.

He instructed me to sit down on the sack and anchor my feet firmly on the ground, quite a difficult task since we were on a slope. But I soon discovered how necessary this was, because hunters on Vigur

- on Vestmannaeyjar hunters drop themselves off cliffs - remain seated until the game is sighted. Then they jump up suddenly, increasing the element of surprise, and scoop their prey in to the net.

Lifting the 5kg pole up and down was quite tiring and I was often so slow that the birds had plenty of time to veer away. Besides, I kept slipping down the hillside, clattering the pole down on to rocks after each failed attempt. Snorri, who had learnt to hunt from the age of 11, was clearly an expert: decisive in the hunt, quick in the kill.

Grabbing the birds with my hands was a skill I did not master that afternoon. For one thing, when a puffin struggles in the net it emits a rather pitiful cry. This sound was somewhat off-putting.

T



More shop than shoes. Berluti's Bond Street store is calm and cool

Devoted to style — body and sole

Savile Row upstart Oswald Boateng tells Rose Shepherd he has a shoe fetish and, on a visit to Berluti, indulges it

Into Berluti, on a Tuesday morning, breezes fashion designer Oswald Boateng — very tall, pencil slim, ineffably stylish in striped suit, fuchsia shirt, designer shades — and what he finds here just blows him away. "Wow!" he says. "Oh, wow!"

Wow, indeed. The airy interior of Berluti's new London branch, the first outside Paris, is quiet, calm, cool in every sense and spacious. There is a lot more shop than there are shoes: a few dozen pairs of Berluti's extraordinary footwear.

into receivership after two major orders from the Far East were cancelled. But he niftily stitched up a deal with Debenhams to design a "diffusion range" — clothes which will bear all the hallmarks of his flamboyant style — and thereby snatched victory from the jaws of defeat. It is a move for which he makes no apologies. He is a businessman and a smart one.

He is also in love with his trade: he radiates enthusiasm. It must have taken such nerve, plus a leap of the imagination, for him to locate

my favourite shop

himself within this golden half-mile, among such traditionalists as Gieves and Hawkes on one hand, and such innovators as Moschino, Krizia and Vivienne West-

wood on the other. He is not, after all, a Jasper Conran and was not brought up to live and breathe design. This isn't to say his childhood was in any way deprived. He was born 30 years ago in Wood Green, not as many glibly assume, the son of Junior Health Minister Paul Boateng, whom he resembles not a whit, but of Kwesi Boateng, a headmaster, and his wife Mary, both originally from Ghana.

His parents saw him as a lawyer, or maybe a politician. He was doing computer studies at Southgate College, aged 15, when he opened his eyes to the beauties of painting, sculpture, design.

Mr Boateng, whose own clients include Mick Jagger, Robbie Williams and Peter Mandelson (new Labour, new tailor) is based a short stroll from here on Vigo Street, a young upstart among the sobersides of Savile Row. His suits are a unique synthesis of traditional tailoring and high fashion. He takes the classics and reinvents them with the same flair and caprice as Olga Berluti brings to shoes. Both ply a venerable trade and both are at the cutting edge.

He recalls: "When I told my father what I wanted to do he said, 'Son, you're crazy. Design clothes? That's no job.'" It took a while to persuade Mr Boateng that fluency in the arcane language of fashion was worth having.

One can see why he has so avidly awaited this opening: it is good news for the whole Bond Street area, now pulsing with new creative blood, and it is good news in particular for arch devotee Mr Boateng, who appears in buoyant mood after recent difficulties.

Mr Boateng is fired by the idea of some kind of collaboration with Berluti and at the very least expects to see clients shuttling back and forth between the two shops. "You can match the finish of a shoe

leather to my suits, so I could do a two-tone dark purple and Olga could give me a leather with that sort of finish."



A mix of traditional style and cutting edge fashion. Olga Berluti's shoes are not just practical, they're art, says tailor Oswald Boateng

Remembering the first Berluti shoe he ever saw, Mr Boateng says: "Olga's not a young designer and she's not so traditional, but she's modern at the same time. I was thinking, 'how can this be? As a creator, these are the shoes for me.'" The cheapest pair is about £320. Still, as he points out, Berluti shoes are like no others. They are made from a single piece of fine leather with the most unusual patina (achieved, he tells me, by the bleaching effect of moonlight). "I'll give you some examples," says Mr Boateng, taking up a tan brogue. "The shape's very unusual.

It's a very sexy line. You just don't do that." Not with your average brogue, at any rate, you don't. "And I love these." He seizes another pair, black with undertones of green, an artful mismatch, one shoe with a line of stitching, one without. "I love this cheeky seam. When I see it I'm excited because I know what she's up to." Every line has a name and with each comes a painting, its likeness. He says: "You don't only get the shoe, you get a picture of your shoe. And if you have a large enough wardrobe you can put your pictures in it. It becomes art, it is art that you're buying." ● **Berluti, 43 Conduit St, London W1 (0171-437 1740). Open Monday to Saturday, 9.30am-6pm.**

- Supplies the candle-makers stocks the entire kit for making the sort of chunky, multi-wick candles that are ideal for evening barbecues. It also sells anti-midge perfumes to mix in. Mail order: (0171-602 4031).
- Pam Lord's sourcing service, Lord & Vella, is used by interior designers worldwide. Call her on 0171-584 1920.
- Claire's Accessories are popping up on high streets country-wide, and promise to be as big over here as they are in America. Heaven for little girls, and their mothers. The shops are stuffed

- Scumble Goose's ready-to-paint MDF furniture has the best shapes in the business, including French armoires from £545. You can buy them ready assembled by mail order or visit the showroom at Lewiston Mill, Stroud (01453 731305).
- UPDATE: Spend £500 at CP Hart's bathroom showroom at 103-105 Regent's Park Road, London NW1 before September 5 and it will pay the VAT (0171-586 9856) ... The first Conran Collection shop is at 12 Conduit Street, London W1 (0171-399 0710).

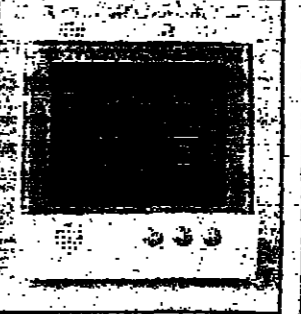
GADGETS

WHAT is it with the British weather? One day it's freezing, the next it's a knotted-handkerchief scorcher. Keeping cool at home when we hit passing heatwaves can be an expensive business. Portable air conditioning with refrigerator units to belt out truly cool air can set you back anything from £600 to £1,000.

For cooling on a budget consider the Goldair portable air cooler. This large plastic tower uses water — or even ice cubes — to pump out slightly-chilled air. In an average-size room it will reduce the temperature by a couple of degrees.

The unit has a three-speed stand fan and filtered air is pumped out through louvre slats across the top. It can be set to pump air out in a fixed direction or circulated in a motorised 120-degree sweep.

The unit can also be set to turn off automatically. Frost "cool" and the above features are performed but with added water droplets.



Cool: digital thermometer

GIVEN the instability of our weather, the digital indoor/outdoor thermometer is a boon. Just knowing what the weather's doing means you know what to wear when you rise. Clocking outside climates until now meant dangling a probe from a window.

With the Cordless Indoor/Outdoor Thermometer the possibilities are endless. The LCD display on the central unit reads the indoor temperature while also logging those at three other locations.

TIM WAPSHOTT

● Goldair Portable Air Cooler, £169, and Oregon Cordless Thermometer plus one sensor, £49.95, both from Innovations (0870 908 7070). Additional sensors, £19.95, from Oregon Scientific (01628 826125).

SALE

During the Summer Sale our entire collection of exclusive international brand and designer furniture is reduced to save you 20% to 50% off our usual prices. Enjoy some of the most exciting furniture in the UK, and let our free interior design service help you put the pieces together.



20% OFF Stanley CAPRI

Display cabinet	£3495	£2699	£2429
Oval dining table	£1999	£1499	£1349
Dining chair	£349	£269	£242

AND 0% APR FINANCE

FURNITURE Village INTERNATIONAL

Maple House 148 Tottenham Court Road London W1 0171 387 7000

Lightweight luxuries

CAMPING GEAR

As outdoor music festivals grow and the fashion pack start to swap their trainers for hiking boots, the allure of the great outdoors and the equipment that goes with it is increasing. The Camping and Caravanning Association has seen its membership double since 1990. According to its marketing co-ordinator, Penny Heathcote, the trend is due to a need to break free from our "sanctified, sterile and safe lives" and to find different adrenaline sources in more natural, wild surroundings.

As well as being cheaper and more flexible than staying in hotels, camping also means you can invest in the latest outdoor gear, dome-style tents, designer kit from outdoor labels such as North Face or Berghaus and, of course, the all-important gadget-type accessories.

Dave Aizlewood, manager of outdoor specialists shop Taunton Leisure, advises buying lightweight and compact camping accessories that are not only portable but also reliable.

Bedding is also important, he says, should have a season rating between one and five: one for the summer, four for general use and five for arctic weather.

How much you take on your journey will depend on your mode of transport. If you are travelling by car, take the lot. But if you are going on foot, obey the cardinal packing rule: lay everything out on the bed, then halve it.

MARY ANN PERCY

RIGHT Lightweight and versatile, the DragonFly Multi-fuel Stove (487g, £99.99, from Taunton Leisure (01823 331 875), runs on either Coleman fuel, kerosene, diesel, petrol or aviation gas, and has fold-away legs for compact storage

LEFT The extra pockets on the hardy Argyl BC35 rucksack, £40, from Blacks (0191-416 2929) make it perfect for storing camping supplies such as Thermos flasks or water bottles

RIGHT London restaurant Mash (0171-637 5555) is now catering for the outdoor camping lark, with its new five-litre mini keg, £16.95 (plus £5 for a deluxe tap), which is portable and available in four beer flavours

LEFT The dual-function Energizer outdoor flashlight, £10.99, from YHA Adventure Shops (01784 458825 for stockists), can be adjusted for use as either a hand-held torch or a free-standing floodlight

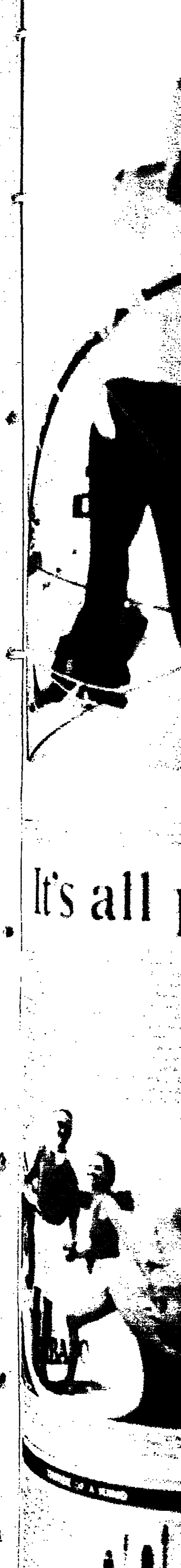
RIGHT A real life-saver, the Lifesystems Sweetwater Guardian water pump, £69.95, filters bacteria and microbes, ensuring water is fit for drinking. One litre of water is pumped per minute. From Snow+Rock (01932 569569 for stockists (01932 569569 for stockists and mail order)

ABOVE Made from a virtually indestructible plastic, the Cascoolan dinner set, £8.95, contains a plate, bowl, mug and utensils, and comes in a drawstring bag. From Taunton Leisure (01823 331875)

RIGHT Fitted with a comfy, elasticated headband, the Pezzi Saxo E35, £12.99, from YHA Adventure Shops (01784 458825 for stockists) can be used as either a head lamp or a hand-held flashlight

RIGHT The aluminium mini espresso maker (weight 700g, £14.99, from YHA Adventure Shops (01784 458825), ensures that camp-fire coffees are the real thing

LEFT Lifeventure concentrated soap is biodegradable, pH-balanced and lathers in fresh or salty water. Made from organic ingredients, the soap can be used to wash skin, hair, clothing, fruit and vegetables. £3.25 for 100ml, from Blacks (0191-416 2929)

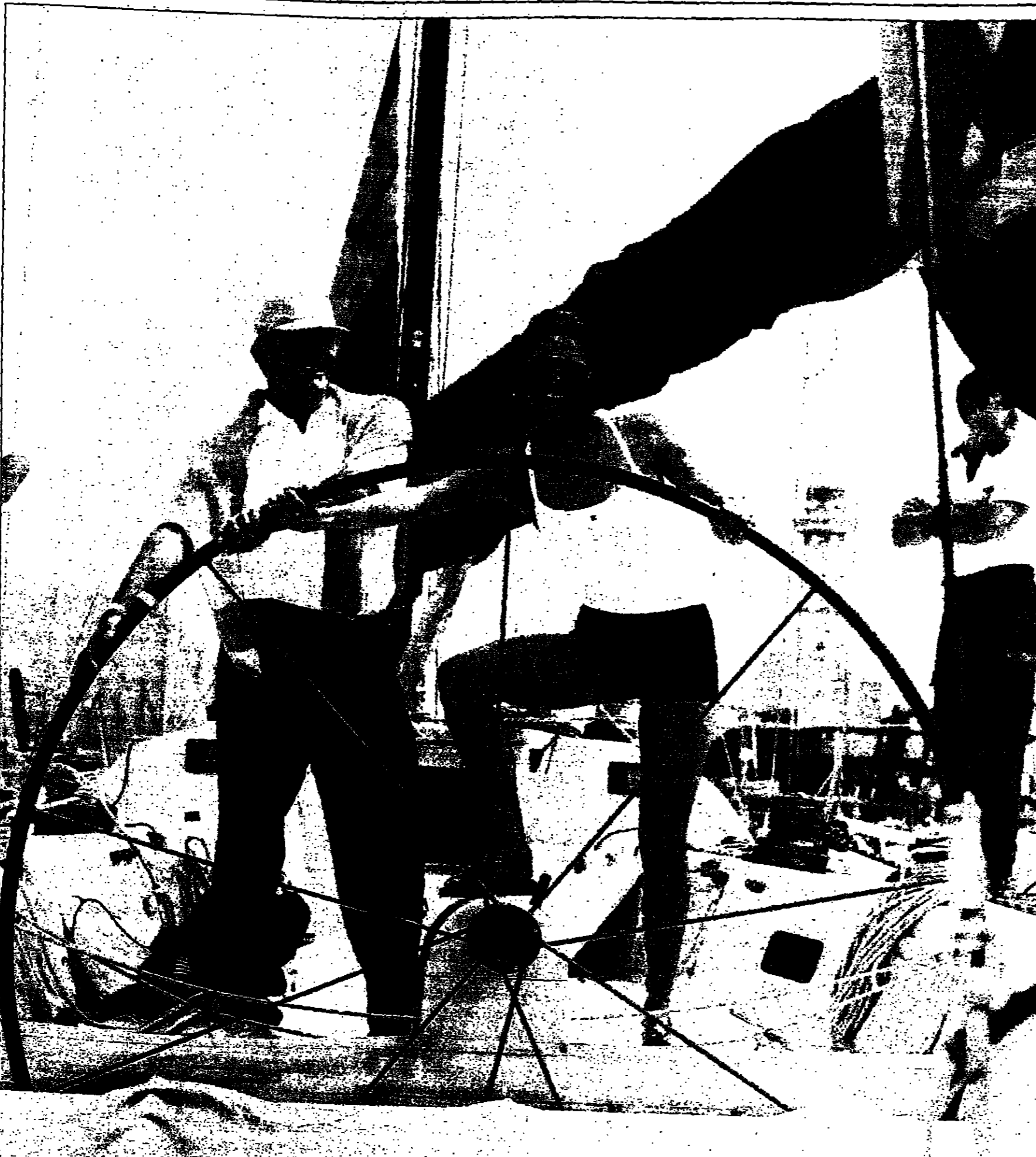


It's all

Handwritten signatures and notes at the bottom right of the page.

GADGETS

With the British weather, it's a known fact that you'll need a waterproof jacket when you go sailing. But what if you can't find one? Portable waterproofing is the answer. It's a liquid that you can spray on to your clothes and it will keep them waterproof for up to a year. It's available from most outdoor gear shops and sailing stores. It's a great investment for anyone who goes sailing regularly. It's also available in a spray-on form for your shoes. It's a great way to keep your shoes waterproof and looking like new. It's available from most outdoor gear shops and sailing stores. It's a great investment for anyone who goes sailing regularly.



He wears: linen shirt, £89, sweater, £110, trousers, £99, sailing cap, £25, Ermenegildo Zegna, 37 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-493 4471). She wears: white costume, £250, black swimming shorts, £150, sunglasses, £90, shoes, £175, Chanel, 26 Old Bond Street, W1 (0171-493 5040)



Striped sailor's dress, £275, Vivienne Westwood Gold Label, 6 Davies Street, W1 (0171-629 3757)



Swimsuit, £180, skirt, £160, cardigan, £185, Liza Bruce, 9 Pont Street, SW1 (0171-235 8423)

It's all plain sailing

It was only the thought of having to don a pair of bell bottoms that's been keeping you from yachting all these years, then you can breathe a sigh of relief because it turns out they're not necessary. The appropriate look at this year's Cowes Regatta isn't, however, going to be easy for slightly overweight yachting enthusiasts (but then which look is?). The appropriate look in 1998 involves little fabric and a very tight fit. And of course appropriate is all important when there's royalty about, as there tends to be at Cowes — even if it's

only the Duke of Edinburgh or Edward, the Prince currently known as Mr Windsor. Look appropriate, so the legend goes, and you'll stand a far better chance of being introduced. Serious sailors might advise their guests that looking frumpy is less important than getting cold. In fact, in some quarters there is a new snobbery where yachting guests must compete with one another to look as plain and functional as possible. But those are yachting parties to avoid at all costs. Dressing functionally also means being expected to participate in the sailing. No getting drunk. No loafing about with glasses of champagne trying to look like an advertisement. Horrible. After all, what are holidays about if they aren't about loafing? And what would be the point of boats (now that we have aeroplanes) if you have to look ugly when you're on them?

Photographs by TIM GRIFFITHS
Styling by Jennifer Guerrini-Maraldi
Hair and make-up by Fernando Torrent
Model: Lotte Karigen
Flights to the Barcelona Regatta courtesy of Iberia (0171-830 0011)



He wears: polo shirt, £49, shorts, £79, Ermenegildo Zegna, as before. Sunglasses, D&G by Marcolin, from £97 (01635 529997). She wears: flesh-coloured swimsuit, £180, tank top, £135, Liza Bruce, as before



Striped top, £325, by Vivienne Westwood Gold Label, as before. Shorts, £115, cap, £40, Ralph Lauren, 143 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-491 4967). Red shoes, £156, J.P. Tod's, 35 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 1321)

As soon as you open Selective's Autumn catalogue you'll understand why it's the choice of well-dressed women.

A special collection of classics brought right up to date with this season's colours and fabrics.

Discover the luxury of cashmere in a tailored jacket or a classic full length coat - both sumptuously soft, and immaculately finished yet surprisingly affordable.

Enjoy stylish knitwear in the softest textures and richest colours - from Italian designed wool-blend chenille to luxurious pure ribbed silk.

Update your wardrobe with superbly cut wonderfully wearable suits and separates in pure new wool, wool blends and velour.

Order from home and your clothes will be delivered promptly and beautifully packaged direct to your door.

See for yourself.

For your FREE catalogue call
0845 071 0845
Calls charged at local rate
Quote Z45

Or complete and return the coupon to the FREEPOST address below.

Please send me my FREE copy of Selective's Autumn catalogue.

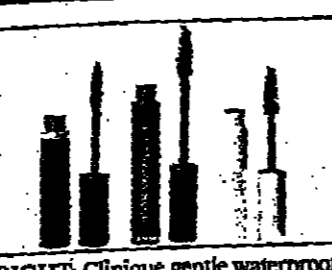
Miss/Ms/Mrs/Ms _____ Initial _____
Surname _____
Address _____
Postcode _____

Post to: Selective, FREEPOST, Dept Z-457, Belton Road West, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 5HR

We can provide more details to other organisations who may wish to offer us their products and services. If you do not wish to receive these offers, please tick this box.

THREE OF A KIND

No one wants to look like a pirate with a black eye-patch during Cowes Week. To ensure clear, fresh-looking eyes, here are three of the best waterproof mascaras. LG LEFT: Chanel waterproof mascara, £15, Harvey Nichols (0171-235 5000) and department stores nationwide MIDDLE: Rimmel, 100 per cent waterproof mascara, £2.79, chemists, supermarkets and department stores nationwide (01233 625076)



RIGHT: Clinique gentle waterproof mascara, £11, leading department stores nationwide, (0171-409 6953)



Fancy a bird or two? Quail is skewered and roasted by the dozen at an open-air stall

Where the chefs never sleep and the food gets faster

New York's restaurant scene is booming and its streets are alive with cooking; Dominic Bradbury gets a taste of food on the move

New York is the biggest restaurant in the world. In a country where size really does matter, New York is the colossus of cuisine. With the best and most varied restaurant life in America, it is the great melting pot of a hundred global cooking styles. And in a city where people have become too busy to cook for themselves, eating out is a way of life supporting thousands of restaurants, take-aways and food stalls. As kitchens shrink and waste away in the city's apartments, New Yorkers eat out or feast on take-aways at least 60 per cent of the time — a good 100 per cent or more than the people of other fine culinary cities such as London. That helps fuel the rise and rise of New York restaurateurs who in turn offer an average meal about £6 or £7 cheaper than their London counterparts. No wonder New Yorkers are getting fatter.

There is also a definitive New York street food culture: the smell of food baking, sizzling and frying fingers over the pavements and avenues, wafting out its charms. It is everywhere you turn and there is none of that English reserve about eating on the move — all New Yorkers must have a coffee in a styrofoam cup and a bagel in hand as they go about their daily business. Just come to a corner and — despite Mayor Giuliani's efforts to crack down on the calorie-pushers cluttering the pavements — there is another food push-cart, with another chilli dog, giant pretzel or a slice of succulent watermelon.

And food is a big part of the rampant street festival life of New York, especially the huge culinary festivals of summer start and summer end: the Ninth Avenue Food Festival and the San Genarro Festival of Little Italy, held between 10 and 20 September.

It seems that Ninth Avenue, 25 years' old last month, now has the edge on its older Italian brother. Ninth lasts just one weekend, but between two and three million people roll out to slurp and burp their way through an eclectic mix of eats and treats.

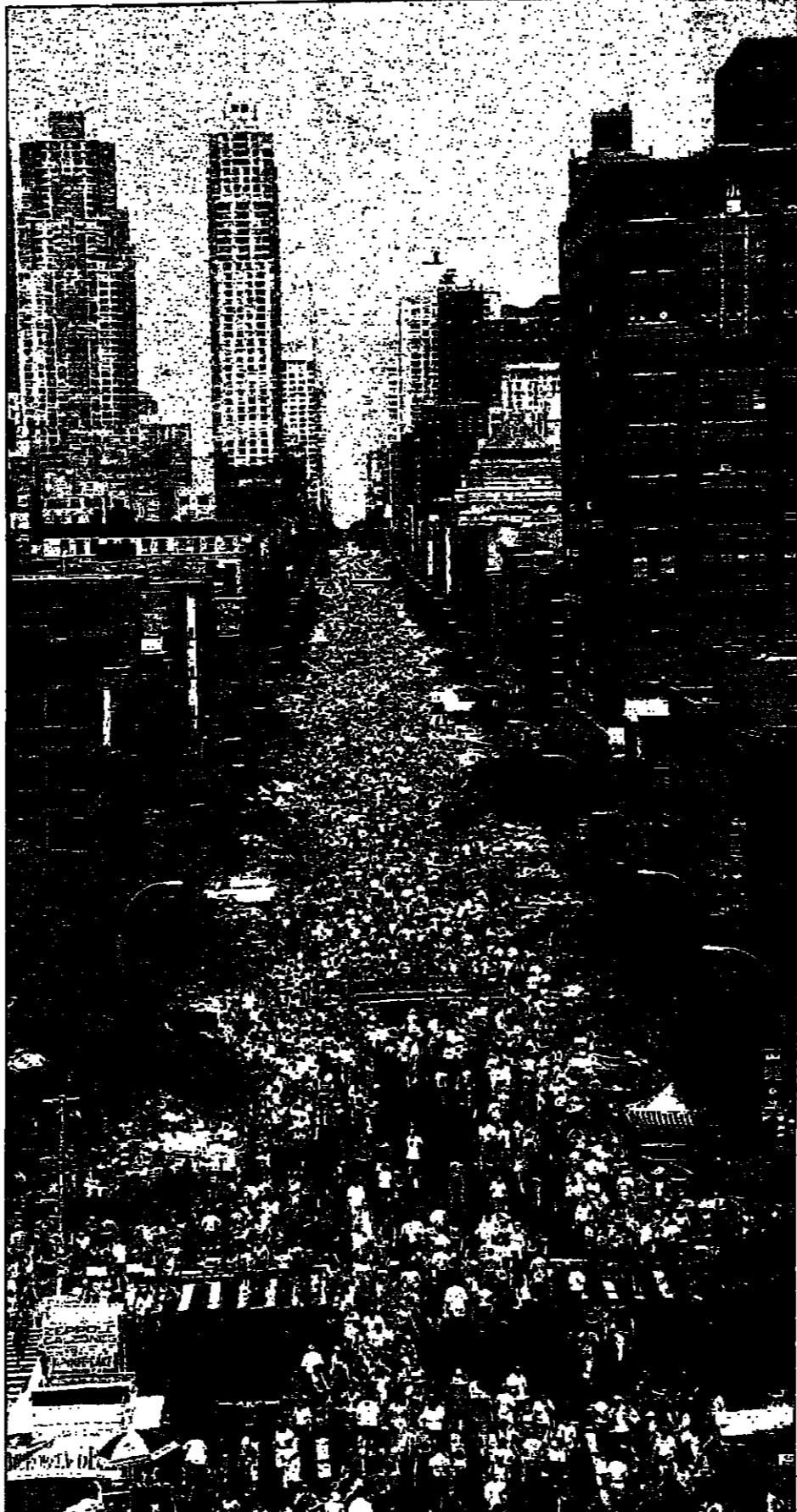
San Genarro, in the third week of September, lasts a longer and lazier ten days, celebrating the patron saint of Naples and has, of course, an indisputably Italian theme along with a more diluted crowd.

Unlike anything that London puts on, Ninth Avenue's beans came into being as a way of getting New Yorkers to wake up to the delights of their area. In the 1970s, Hell's Kitchen, as some still call the neighbourhood, was being dragged down by the peep shows and triple-X parlours over on seedy Eighth Avenue, which you needed to cross to get over to Ninth from the more salubrious Fifth, Sixth and Seventh. As a way of promoting their en-

riching recipe of restaurants and shops, Ninth Avenue traders banded together and cooked up their very own celebration.

"We found that New Yorkers loved the idea of a food festival," says co-founder Lili Fable, president of the Ninth Avenue Association that runs the great feast, and co-owner of the Poseidon Bakery, a Greek emporium in the heartland of Hell's Kitchen. "A quarter of a million people came those first two days and we sold out of everything—the merchants just couldn't keep up and a lot of stores ran out of food."

"Right from the beginning it's been a tremendous success and what makes us unique is the ethnic diversity, plus the fact that it's a grassroots agency that has started this. It's run by people who actually live here — I still live over my store — and now we have people from London, Florida, Canada who plan their vacations to come out for the festival. We're very proud of that."



Serious foodies: up to three million people attend the huge Ninth Avenue Food Festival

years old. It goes on and on until you can eat no more and you have to lie down and die. "We've got all kinds of foods on this avenue," says Chantale Bayard-Fabri, of Chantale's Cajun Kitchen. "Most of it is very authentic — everything from Afghani to Italian to Malaysian — and nowhere else in the city do you have that in such a concentrated space. It's all relatively inexpensive and it's good."

On this part of Ninth Avenue, every other shop space is a restaurant, a deli or a food store. This is not up-and-coming SoHo with its designer restaurants, or pricey Madison Avenue where the rich folk eat, yet on Ninth the restaurants are still opening up at an

incredible rate, making you wonder how they can all survive. "People are eating out more and more," says James dell'Orto, owner of 40-year-old Italian eatery, Hero Boy, and inventor of the infamous 6ft Hero Boy sandwich. "People just don't have time to cook at home. Fast food was invented in America and we are a microcosm of America."

Ninth has become a true restaurant row, partly because of low rents, the growth of new industries, such as publishing, in the area and the revival of nearby theatreland on 42nd Street, all helping to fill the void left by the decline of the docks nearby, where the Atlantic liners used to come in. From the sophisticated

eatery such as Le Madeleine, Zen Palace and L'Allegria to younger, cooler turks such as Citron 47 and Revolution, there is a peach for every palate — just what the festival is supposed to be saying.

"Ninth Avenue is being written up by the restaurant critics again and mentioned by the talk-show hosts," says Lili Fable. "At one time everyone said don't go to Ninth Avenue, you take your life in your hands. Now all that has changed. You can do very well here not knowing how to cook. You'll never starve in New York City."

● Dominic Bradbury flew to New York courtesy of Icelandair (0171-388 5599).

Drink



Jane MacQuitty

They are known as Fabs, but the new generation of alcoholic soft drinks are anything but

The future's Fab: a flavoured alcoholic beverage. At least big booze concerns like Bacardi-Martini hope it is. And if this summer's anticipated late heat-wave arrives, Fabs will be everywhere.

Like every other designer drink, Fabs evolved from the many mixes that went before. Cocktails were the cutting-edge drink of the Seventies, followed by wine-based coolers. Next came pink-coloured and peach-flavoured drinks before alopops waxed and waned.

The swift arrival and departure of an alcoholic craze has much to do with each new generation of drinkers wanting to disguise the taste of alcohol in the first stages of their drinking life before acquiring a real taste for the stuff later on.

This trend backfired with sweet, fizzy alopops because, despite their makers' denials, drinks like the sickly-sweet 4.7 per cent alcohol Hooper's Hooch Alcoholic Lemonade and Alcoholic Blackcurrant were obviously aimed at teenage drinkers, using flavours

in the freezer and pour icy thick, also fit into the mixed-spirit blend category.

The 5.4 per cent alcohol Bacardi Breezers (£1.39) are the big mixed-spirit name, with heavy emphasis on their so-called "tropical" style. The pineapple version — "a blend of Bacardi rum, pineapple, other exotic flavours and sparkling water" — is the best of these, reckoning on crystallized pineapple, yet with that familiar, unpleasant Fab finish.

Only the deranged would want to drink the fluorescent orange, peach or watermelon versions of Bacardi Breezers, the latter a weird toothpaste-scented, fuchsia-coloured offering. Incidentally, sales of Breezers were up a third last year.

No one can deny these drinks are convenient, especially in summer for picnics and holidays. But it's style, not convenience, that has influenced the brands.

With striking bottles and names to match, these Fabs are a desperate attempt by the top dozen brands to boost declining sales and add "interest" to their spirits. Not all suc-

ceeded. The tequila-based Barking Frog surfaced briefly two summers ago then disappeared. Even vodka, the darling of the white-spirit world with worldwide sales of 1.18 billion, is likely to show only limited growth in 1998, no matter how many new vodka-derived Fabs are launched. Smirnoff Vodka's ersatz Mule

(£1.39), a strange 5.5 per cent gingery concoction, launched three summers ago, is the leading Fab swig here.



challenging the Mule is Martini's 5.4 per cent Mez (£1.49), a chilli-filtered, schtrappos-based drink that smelled to me vaguely of pepper, lemon and old eau de cologne. Yet to its makers it has "the kick of schtrappos with a subtle hint of citrus".

The latest arrivals are the 5.4 per cent V2 Vodka Martini (£1.39), whose silver bottle delivers a peppery, earthy, mawkish mix that James Bond would have nothing to do with, and Bacardi Rigo (£1.39), whose 5.4 per cent alcohol has a fake lime scent with a cream soda finish.

And if you don't like the sound of this lot, it gets worse. Bacardi-Martini promises to launch two new products every year. If the 30 or so I sampled are typically Fab, I'll mix my own, thanks.

Next week: Wine sales

ced. The tequila-based Barking Frog surfaced briefly two summers ago then disappeared. Even vodka, the darling of the white-spirit world with worldwide sales of 1.18 billion, is likely to show only limited growth in 1998, no matter how many new vodka-derived Fabs are launched. Smirnoff Vodka's ersatz Mule

THE DRINKS THAT TIME FORGOT



A rather non-U tippie, despite royal patronage

Cherry brandy

The very concept of cherry brandy seems prone to abuse. The term now covers all manner of cherry-flavoured liqueurs, some without a brandy base — or even cherries — in their make up.

Back in the 1600s, a famous public schoolboy wandered into a spartan country pub to drown his sorrows. In opting to do so with, of all things, cherry brandy — considered something of a big girl's tippie — the lad who would be king (for it was he) first tasted the mockery of the press which has dogged the poor old sick ever since. What was he thinking of? Who was advising him? History does not record.

Not to be confused with Kirsch, the pure white and still popular spirit distilled chiefly from small wild cherries grown in the Black Forest, a proper cherry brandy should involve the juice of ripe cherries, fermented with the stones crushed for a distinctive, bitter-almond finish. It is almost always sweetened with sugar or glucose. Peter Heering of Denmark still sells his Cherry Heering, first created 150 years ago: Bols also shifts a few cases here. Otherwise, it has been most decidedly left on the shelf.

Perhaps HRH had been brooding on his ancestor George IV, who is reported to have consumed vast quantities of the stuff to ease the "violent attacks and spasms" of porphyria. Both George III and James I also suffered this monstrous condition, and the Prince is known to fear that it remains in the family line. If only he had been steered towards a Zombie or a Singapore Sling, both classy beverages with pedigree, the former created in 1930s Hollywood, the latter in 1915 in Singapore's Raffles Hotel. Each requires a fair dose of cherry brandy and are due a revival around about now.

KATE STRONACH



Lasting just one weekend, the festival offers the chance to try food from all over the world

HENRY HARRIS'S CHEAT OF THE WEEK

THE ENGLISH strawberry season is as good as over but those late-harvest beauties are without a doubt the best. I wouldn't consider using strawberries from anywhere else in the world other than England. Their succulence and richness is without equal.

Anyway, it would be very dull to eat them all year round and it would detract from the anticipation that we should all feel when we see the first of the season's home-grown crop in the shops.

My favourite way of eating them has to be in a bowl with a light dusting of caster sugar and a generous amount of untreated Jersey cream. This thick, yellow, buttery mass is the perfect companion for them.

Sadly, it isn't the easiest to find outside of the metropolis, but a good farm shop is your best bet. I get mine from the foodmarket at Harvey Nichols, but if you do have problems finding this delicious accompaniment, then you can use good clotted cream instead.

As a chef, I am always looking for something that will complement a dish perfectly, yet is still a little different to what everyone else is doing.

This time it was a pot of good old-fashioned curd that provided me with today's delicious and very easy recipe.

The cheat is a bit subtle in that it is the use of whipped cream to make the curd go further.

It is, none the less, a simple but delicious way to say goodbye to strawberries until next year.

ORANGE AND RUM CURD
Serves four

2 washed oranges
100g unsalted butter
160g sugar

3 eggs and one yolk, whisked together
75ml dark rum

Zest and juice the oranges and combine with the butter and sugar in a double boiler. Stir occasionally until the sugar has dissolved.

Turn down the heat and, while stirring, continuously add the eggs and rum.

Keep stirring until the mixture has thickened and then transfer it immediately to a clean bowl and set aside to cool. The curd is now complete and will keep in the fridge for two or three days.

To serve with the strawberries, take 125ml of double cream, sweeten it with one teaspoon of icing sugar and whip it together until it forms soft, floppy peaks. Fold this into the curd and serve it dolloped over the strawberries.

● Henry Harris is head chef at the Fifth Floor, Harvey Nichols, London

STAR BUYS

1997 Hardy's Barrook Station, Chevin Blanc Semillon Chardonnay, Yocco, Sonnerfield, Salsbury's and Safeway, £3.99.

1997 Hardy's Barrook Station, Mataro Grosesche Salaz, Yocco, Sonnerfield, Salsbury's and Safeway, £4.29.

Summer is the season for easy entertaining and barbecues accompanied by simple, sunny swiggs. Australia continues to be a popular and good-value source for these, and this splendid duo from Hardy's gets my vote.

The white, 11.5 per cent alcohol and vibrant, peachy and citrusy, makes a good aperitif and can cope with an array of summer fare.

The '96 vintage of this multi-grape blend was disappointing, but the '97 is a real Aussie *Lox de force* from a much better red wine year.

Not for the half-hearted red-wine drinker, this gutsy, dusky '97 oozes with rich, dark, spicy, briary fruit. It is best served with red meats, barbecue food and strong cheeses — even salty blues such as Roquefort.

BEST OF THE BEST
The Co-op's offers tempt, but call 0800 317827 for your nearest outlet, as not every branch features monthly promotions. At those that do, pick from £1.20 off the ripe 1997 Fuza Chardonnay from Portugal (£3.79) and £1 off their own 1996 Chardonnay delle Venozie (£2.59), with 70p off H Ryman's 1996 Santara Chardonnay (£3.29), one of Spain's most impressive new-wave chardonnays.

The Times Cook

August's long and lazy days are the perfect backdrop to rediscovering your kitchen



Frances Bissell

August is an agreeable month to spend at home in London. There is more time to see friends over a meal, time to explore new shops and restaurants — and time for me to cook even more than I normally do. Here over the next few weeks, you will find easy and delicious recipes that I have been cooking, with plenty of ideas for impromptu entertaining. Today's recipes, for example, make up a meal that I put together from the supermarkets.

shelving, to provide a taste of America, a taste of Italy, and other groupings, including the beginnings of a good selection of organic foods. I was also impressed by the range of Caribbean ingredients and Mediterranean food, including the Chalfic range of dried vegetables, among which I noticed okra. There was an excellent artisan spaghetti alla chitarra from the Abbruzzi in the Italian selection, much of which comes under the excellent Merchant Gourmet label. This, too, went into my shopping bag, and by now, my plans for supper were beginning to crystallise.

and, indeed, most of the other desserts that I have made recently. This has been one of our finds of the summer. I wish I could say the same for the elegantly bottled Neos Cabernet Sauvignon from Italy's Friuli region, which I chose from their wine selection. It was dull, technically perfect, no doubt, but it could have come from anywhere. Instead, I highly recommend their 1992 Cava Torre del Gall, a sparkler superior to many of the cheaper champagnes.

with fromage frais. It makes an excellent first course. I served it one day with individual heaps of leek salad, miniature tomato salad, and slim green beans with garlic. The mezze needs no recipe; just add some olives, radishes, carrot and cucumber batons, a yoghurt dressing, or some garlicky mayonnaise to the ingredients that I have described above. You can also make up your own selection, including perhaps jars of roasted red peppers, squid salad, tuna, sardines in olive oil, egg mayonnaise. Serve the collection of starters in bowls, or on a large platter, and accompany them with pita bread, other flat Mediterranean bread, or

the sesame-crusted Cypriot "daktyla" loaves. Light mezzes of three cheeses (Serves 4) Note: this recipe uses uncooked eggs. 1: lea-les or tsp gelatine or vegetarian equivalent. 100ml vegetable or chicken stock. 100g soft fresh goat's cheese. 100g blue cheese. 250g fromage frais. 2 free-range or organic egg whites.

dissolved. Blend the cheeses until smooth, then blend in the gelatine liquid. Whisk the whites until firm and fold into the cheese. Spoon into wet ramekins or dariole moulds, cover and refrigerate until set, or overnight. When ready to serve, run a sharp knife between mousse and mould, and turn out on to plates garnished with salad.

Spaghetti with spinach and goat's cheese (Serves 4 to 6) 500g spaghetti alla chitarra, or other dried pasta. Salt. 250g young spinach leaves, rinsed and dried. 2tbsp extra virgin olive oil. 200g soft goat's cheese. Freshly ground black pepper. Fresh parmesan (optional).

BOIL A LARGE saucepan of lightly salted water and cook the pasta according to the directions on the pack. A minute before the end of cooking time, stir in the spinach. Drain the pasta, toss into a bowl with the olive oil, fork in the goat's cheese and season with pepper. Flake on parmesan, if using it, and serve immediately. Blue cheese or mozzarella can be used instead of goat's cheese; rocket, watercress or fresh herbs instead of spinach.

PLT THE gelatine in a jug and soften it in the cold stock. Then stand the jug in a pan of hot water, and leave until the gelatine has

THE PERFECT KISSEL

HERE is another idea for using cherries, but you can also use other soft fruit, either a mixture as for summer pudding, or singly. This traditional Russian recipe is excellent for a bumper harvest of mulberries or blackberries.

INGREDIENTS: for four servings, 500g prepared soft fruit, rinsed and drained, 600ml water, about 125g sugar, or to taste, and two tablespoons potato starch, arrowroot or cornflour.

METHOD: Simmer the berries in water until soft, then sieve into a clean saucepan. Add sugar to taste. Mix the starch with two tablespoons cold water, stir into the syrup and bring to the boil, when you will see the mixture thicken. Boil for two minutes only and pour into a glass bowl. Cool, then chill before serving.

TO SERVE: This vivid, refreshing, jewel-coloured dessert has a soft, almost junkie-like set, and is best served with single cream

Next week: Salmon tartare

kirsch, light carefully, and serve with vanilla or cinnamon ice-cream and thin almond biscuits.

This almond biscuits (Serves 4-6) 125g ground almonds. 100g caster sugar. 1 free-range egg white.

MIX THE ingredients together, only gradually, adding the egg white, as you may not need it all to bind the almond and sugar to a paste. Spread into thin rounds on greased, floured baking sheets, and bake in the middle of a pre-heated oven at 180C, gas mark 4 for ten minutes, until just set and lightly golden. Transfer to wire racks, and the biscuits will crisp up when cold. If you wish, replace 2 tablespoons ground almonds with flaked almonds for a different texture.

©Frances Bissell 1998

Next week: Fresh food — delivered to the door



The tomatoes, too, looked like the tomatoes of ten years ago — pale, unripe, not at all tempting, and Dutch. There was a notable exception in punnets of fragrant, firm, red, English miniature plum tomatoes, and these went into my shopping bag.

There were improvements in much of the produce. A wider variety of named potatoes, good melons, Washington State cherries, fresh carrots and convenience produce such as washed spinach, watercress, herbs and salad stuffs.

But where were the oes and oak leaf lettuce, the Batavia and round lettuces? I am sick of bagged salad leaves with the ubiquitous gritty and bruised lollo rosso. Sweet, crunchy oes lettuce is my current favourite. But I took a bag of spinach, as I was sure I would be able to use it.

Where the new Budgens really scores is in its groceries. These have been grouped in "themed"

The reason this particular pasta is so appealing is that it has a true artisan roughness in texture — so important for encouraging the sauce or other ingredients to cling and one of the reasons I never buy packets of so-called fresh tagliatelle in supermarkets. In fact the spaghetti alla chitarra, once cooked, turned out to be chunky enough to take quite a robust sauce.

The next time I cook it, I shall make a meat sauce of crumbled Italian sausages, flavoured with fennel, add some aubergine and tomato, and will have a passable version of spaghetti alla Norma.

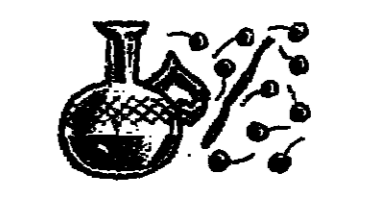
To start the meal, I collected a selection of what one might broadly describe as Mediterranean mezze, some Greek-style Loukanika sausages for grilling, some sliced chorizo and jamon serrano from Spain, the sweet English tomatoes and some fresh okra, which I fried in olive oil.

Usually I make my own dips and salads, but I decided to try some from the Israeli Yarden ranges: aubergine in hot sauce, tomato and pepper salad, and several others. They proved very good, as did Budgens' 1996 Late Harvest Gewurztraminer Rymill Coonawarra from Australia, the perfect companion to a ripe Charentais melon, a clafoutis, a chilled rice pudding,

Here are the recipes for the dishes I cooked for supper. I have included the recipe for a mousse, made from some of the soft goat's cheese and blue cheese, together



ALAN ADLER



PUT THE wine, cinnamon and sugar in a saucepan and simmer until you have a well-flavoured syrup. Stir in the cherries and cook gently for two to three minutes, just sufficient to heat the cherries and release the juices. Transfer the cherries to a bowl. Slake the arrowroot in a tablespoon or two of water, stir into the syrup, bring to the boil and pour over the fruit. When ready to serve, splash on the

CONSUMING INTERESTS: MASCARPONE

QUITE WHY Italian cream cheese should have a mystique and mythical quality denied to anyone else's cream cheese is a retailing mystery I am unable to plumb. In fact, the mascarpone in my tasting were all very ordinary, and largely indistinguishable. Similarities in

the packaging and nutritional details make me suppose that the five supermarket samples came from no more than two sources in Italy. It may have been only one. So my marks are as much for recipes and serving suggestions as for taste and texture. ROBIN YOUNG



Sainsbury's Italian Mascarpone £1.59 for 250g. Claims: "Made from 100 per cent Italian milk. Per 100g serving 404 calories 40.3g fat."

Verdict: Usable recipe suggestions for a chocolate cheesecake and an avocado and mint dip on the reverse of the lid were a bonus. Mild, clean flavour. Tasted like solidified full-fat milk and the texture was quite firm. ★★

Safeway Mascarpone £1.49 for 250g. Claims: "Flavour strength 1" (on a scale of 1 to 5). Calcium 180mg (38 per cent RDA)."

Verdict: Packaging, appearance, taste and details of average nutritional values were identical to Sainsbury's, but the recipe inside the lid was a repulsive one for Tiramisu (using custard powder and instant coffee-please!), with another "serving suggestion" involving bacon, onion, mushroom, pasta and parmesan on the side of the tub. ★

Asda Italian Mascarpone £1.49 for 250g. Claims: "Rich, soft and creamy Italian dessert cheese."

Verdict: OK. It was soft and mild and marginally fatter than the Safeway and Sainsbury versions. There was no recipe printed inside the lid, but the recipe suggestion printed on the tub side was a very simple one for serving with chocolate and pears. ★

Tesco Italian Fresh Mascarpone £1.49 for 250g. Claims: "A very rich full fat cream cheese. A key ingredient in the popular Italian dessert Tiramisu."

Verdict: 46.6 per cent fat made this and the Marks & Spencer version richer than most. The recipe for Tiramisu inside the lid using "strong black coffee" and Tesco fresh custard, whipping cream and extra Tia Maria rather than brandy was preferable to the Tesco effort. It was the only recipe offered on the tub. There was less separation liquid evident than in other tubs. ★★

St Michael Italian Mascarpone £1.39 for 250g. Claims: "Made from pasteurised milk. Mascarpone is an ideal alternative for double cream or crème fraîche, delicious as a topping for fruit or cooking."

MORE FOOD & DRINK IN the times Magazine. Jean-Claude Novelli goes in search of the perfect tomato. Jonathan Meades reviews Ravi.

Verdict: That was the most straightforward explanation of mascarpone's uses on any of the packs, and the recipe for Tiramisu in the lid, using "very strong black coffee", brandy, dark rum, almond and vanilla essences and St Michael pouring double cream (I thought mascarpone was supposed to be an alternative to that), was the most seductive and successful of those on offer. 46.6 per cent fat like Tesco's. ★★

Casa Leonardi Mascarpone. Igor £2 for 250g from Ferrari Italian Delicatessen, Cross Street, Islington, London N1. Claims: "Il Gusto Italiano. Qualita Italia."

Verdict: The product, though well in date, had developed an unsightly yellowish skin and a noticeably sour taste, though it was also perceptibly softer and creamier. There was no nutritional information, and no recipe or serving suggestion. ★

Mascarpone Granarolo £2.10 for 250g from Harvey Nichols. Claims: "Formaggio di Crema di Latte Pastorizzato. Prodotto e confezionato di Granarolo Felisina, Bologna."

HOME COOKING

Novelist Rosie Thomas describes the sensual role of food to Joe Warwick

The comforting concept of home-cooked meals provided by mother were not a strong feature of Rosie Thomas's childhood. The best-selling novelist whose books include *Other People's Marriages*, *A Woman for Our Times* and, most recently, her top ten bestseller, *Every Woman Knows a Secret*, lost her mother at the age of ten. "I didn't have a mother, so mother's cooking did not enter into my life. I have no stories to tell about that," she says, hurt still in her voice 40 years later. Her mother's death is something she never discusses. She does have some early memories of her, and one connected with food. "I was a post-war baby, and then food as an art form did not have much significance. It was just something you ate," she recalls. "I remember ration books and I remember mum saying 'I'm going out to get the rations'."

After her mother died, Ms Thomas and her younger brother and sister lived with their father. As to who did the cooking she simply says, "We managed." Her father eventually handed the care of his children over to his mother. She grew up in the tightly-knit village of Caerwys, north Wales where there were no traces of culinary exoticism. She endured a diet of "Lots of meat, potatoes — lots of potatoes — and hearty puddings." She earned a scholarship to a boarding school in Denby where, although she received a good education, she had to eat food that was: "Completely dire — beyond description. I remember terrible puddings called things like 'dead man's leg' and 'bathroom ceiling' which was a kind of meringue. There were utterly disgusting things like stews with sheep's jaw bones." There was, she says, no escape. "You could



Rosie Thomas, front right, has lunch with friends and family at home; and Ms Thomas taking boxing lessons

ask for a small portion but you had to eat all of that, there was either a member of staff or a member of the sixth form at either end of the table and you were watched — you just sat there and you ate it."

These unpleasant experiences are something that she feels she shares with the majority of her generation. "Good food was one of those things that I discovered when I grew up, like sex and freedom and all of those things," she says. "I wasn't conscious of food until I became an adult."

Her first taste of finer fare came in the mid-Sixties and coincided with her first boyfriend. "His parents were well-to-do and had a wonderful

cook, which in itself was unusual in those days, and we'd go to their house for dinner," she enthuses. "We'd get aubergines and bell peppers. They were the sort of things that I'd never seen before. Even garlic seemed exotic."

Today, Ms Thomas enjoys cooking and considers herself competent in the kitchen. For her, food and its preparation are symbolic and significant. "Food is one of the three things that comes midway between nature and art, and I'm sure that you can guess what the others are," she contends. "Cooking is very important, it's pre-seduction, it's post-seduction, it's intimately connected with sexuality. To cook for somebody is the greatest pleasure and a woman's privilege." She has never had a meal cooked for her by a man.

She remembers of the early years of her marriage the joy that the occasional meal out brought. "It was a treat when

we were young and poor, and we used to go out and eat," she says. "Then we'd go on holiday in France and have the menu gourmand, that always seemed exciting and almost intimidating. I feel sorry that that's all gone now."

And gone it has with her marriage to top literary agent, Caradoc King. Her books earn enough to land her with six-figure tax bills, and now she can eat where and what she likes. "I still remember the anticipation and the thrill of which menu we could afford," she says. "It was the same as saving up for a pair of Dolce & Gabbana trousers, something you can't really afford but you really want."



Rosie Thomas, right, and sister Lindsay as children



Joanna Pitman



The 'baby blues' arrive with interesting and uncharacteristic revelations

I visited the Westminster Council Register Office this week, a fine, stone edifice on Marylebone Road, where newly married couples step out in a state of fresh nuptial bliss directly on to the approach to the M40. As I arrived, a couple dressed in matching gold lamé were coming down the steps, apparently unperturbed to be walking virtually into the tracks of a speeding coach full of Japanese tourists.

Inside, Pat, who is proud to be the Council's first black registrar, set about transforming Alice from a mere baby into a registered British citizen. After a minor glitch when I couldn't remember Giles's birthdate (Pat put it down to post-partum dementia), we had red and white-crested birth certificates galore — several copies in case we

lose one in our horrible filing system.

Official business concluded, Pat and I had a little gossip about the unusual surge in June babies this year. We calculated that most of them would have been conceived around the time of the Princess of Wales's funeral last year — couples all across the country were clearly leaping into any available bed, either in search of consolation or out of sheer boredom.

● ONE entertaining indignity of new motherhood is the sudden switch into a new and highly hormonal state of mind. Family, friends, midwives, even our postman, had warned of the "baby blues", and all had specified day three for the bombshell to hit. It is perfectly natural, they all said,

every mother has it and it's nothing to worry about.

By evening, Giles was beginning to look at me a little strangely — still no tears to demonstrate real motherhood. We needn't have worried. The flood gates burst on day four. Tears? It was more like a monsoonal downpour. I found myself terribly upset about something, but I couldn't work out what it was. I was just sad. The tear

ducts have not dried up yet. I cry watching the adverts on television: I blub in sympathy at American boy actors of X-corticale iciness; and even during Dido's sublime lament in *Dido and Aeneas* at the Ryedale Festival last Saturday my Kleenex quotient rocketed.

● ALONG with being hugely soppy, I have also become uncharacteristically generous. Door to door salesmen and charity workers are having a field day.

A visit from the man from the Unemployed Workers Self Help Association yesterday resulted in a jackpot haul. He knows he can usually count on selling a packet of dusters, but he looked on astonished yesterday as I forked out for a new ironing board cover, three packets of ballpoint pens, coat hangers, J-cloths, bath cleaner and

a packet of clothes pegs (we don't have a line, but what the hell). He'll be back with a lorry load in a few days' time.

This afternoon, a man rang the doorbell asking if we wanted any manure. I listened to the story of his redundancy and the tale of his new manure business without bursting into tears — and without considering whether we needed any. I agreed to buy 12 bags. The Seventh Day Adventists haven't been round for a while and must be due on our doorstep fairly soon. Giles has taken to sprinting to the door every time the bell rings.

● AT LEAST I was decisive and bought a round dozen bags of manure. I don't know which is worse though — excessive lassitude with the purse strings or indecision. One new mother, a highly intelligent, hugely qualified and experienced solicitor, told me this story with horror. Her nanny decided to go to the Post Office and asked

if she needed any stamps. "Yes please," said the mother. "Do you want first or second class?" asked the nanny to which the mother replied: "I don't know, I'll leave to ask my husband." Men take on more than they realise when they become fathers.

● LOOKING after a new baby renders you fairly comprehensively unaware of what is going on in the outside world, but I found myself in a rare trance of concentration last night reading an article about Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese opposition leader and Nobel Prize-winner.

It is ten years since the Burmese student uprising that brought her into political and took her away from her Oxford-based husband and sons. When I met her two years ago, she had not seen her teenage boys for several years — strength of will that, now that I have my own child, seems even more extraordinary than it did then.

There is another voice to be heard on the age of consent for homosexuals issue — the parents of gay children, says Sharon Maxwell Magnus

How I learnt my son is gay

Last week's dramatic overturning of the clause to change the age of consent from 18 to 16 for gay men revealed a country hugely divided on the issue of sexuality. On the one hand, gay rights groups argue that having a different age of consent for homosexual men is discriminatory. (However, the issues of an age of consent for lesbians has never been expressed in law.) On the other, those opposed to the measure believe lowering the age of consent means leaving teenage boys dangerously exposed to the attentions of exploitative men or colluding in a way of life they believe to be intrinsically wrong.

Throughout the debate, one voice has been largely unheard — that of the parents of men who are gay. Yet it is parents who face the brunt of such issues as how to react to their child's sexuality, whether to allow a boyfriend to stay over, or what to do if their son is seeing an older man. That is assuming that parents know — or can accept — that their child is gay in the first place.

Joy Dickens is founder of the helpline Parents' Friend, a support network for parents of gay children. She admits she was stunned when her then 16-year-old son came out. "He'd told me he was feeling a bit depressed and wanted a chat," she recalls. "So I thought it must be that he was not doing as well in school as we'd thought."

Despite wanting to talk, her son clearly didn't know where to begin, so Ms Dickens had to broach the subject of what was wrong one day after school. Finally her son said, "Two of your friends would understand." Ms Dickens went through her list of friends until she mentioned a gay

couple. Her son picked them. "When he told me he was gay, I felt like I'd been hit in the stomach with a rugby ball," admits Ms Dickens, but her instant, impulsive reaction was to put her arms round her son and tell him that he was the same boy he'd always been. Afterwards, she realised she knew absolutely nothing about life for gay people. To educate herself, she started talking to gay organisations and realised that for many parents discovering a son or daughter is gay is a trauma almost akin to bereavement.

The feelings of bewilderment, loss and even desperation are often made far worse by the fact that parents feel they cannot confide in relatives and friends.

At first Ms Dickens ran the fledgling helpline from her bedroom but she soon found she was unable to cope alone with the round-the-clock calls. Eleven years on, the group is staffed by a network of volunteers and takes around 900 calls each year. "If a parent can't accept a child as they are, it means they will lose that child and that's very sad," she says. "Of course, parents differ in how long it takes them to accept their child or how far they accept their child. Often it's people with religious convictions who find it difficult."

Ms Dickens points out that although each call is different the same fears resurface time and time again. Parents feel guilt that they have somehow "caused" their child's sexuality, fear their child will

be hounded, get Aids, that they won't be able to cope with meeting a partner, or that their child may be exploited by an older man or woman.

Often it's the young person who is attracted to an older one and does the running," says Ms Dickens. "When a young woman goes out with an older man no one thinks anything of it, so why should it be different for gays? What we are looking for is equality. I think the age of consent should be 18 for everyone, but it's important that it's established in law as the same."

Marilyn Hodgkinson was extremely disappointed when the proposal to change the age of consent was defeated in the Lords. Her son Graeme was 20 and at university when she asked him if he was gay. Mrs Hodgkinson had suspected he was, but having grown up in an insular and homophobic community, she had suppressed her suspicions. "I remember my mother not wanting me to join the Woman's Royal Airforce because she said it was full of lesbians," says Marilyn. "My feelings about Graeme were more logical. He simply hadn't brought any girlfriends home."

A year or so previously, she had even asked her husband whether he thought their son was gay. He replied, "I hope not, he'll have a hard life." She finally talked to Graeme about his sexuality when he came home for a break from university and was feeling down. She



Sympathy, understanding and support are what young men need from their parents

asked him whether he had had any relationships. He replied, "Yes, but they haven't worked out." When she then asked him if he had been heterosexual, he simply answered, "No."

"When Graeme talked to me I wanted to support him, but I knew both his dad and I needed to understand more than we did. I'd read in the paper that it might be a child's environment that influenced their sexuality and that made me angry. Then there's always that old chestnut about dominating mothers. I feel having a gay child is the same as having a child who's left-handed or red-haired. It's just how that child is. Gay children don't have a choice about their sexuality, if they are true to themselves."

Marilyn and her husband Alan contacted another support group — Parents Together — and found it immensely useful to talk through their feelings. "I'd always been hooked into the idea that as I had children, I would one day have rosy-cheeked grand-children," says Marilyn. "I had to learn to let go of that fantasy."

Also, as a parent, you have to decide who you'll come out to. When I've told some people their reaction has been why do you need to mention it? It also upsets me that there is this idea that young men need to be protected, because it implies that all gay men are predatory. Graeme is in a relationship with an older

man, but it's the relationship that counts, not whether that person is younger or older."

Graeme feels that his parents' acceptance has made them closer. "There is no longer part of my life that is hidden," he says. "Maybe I could have talked to them earlier, but then it took me a long time to come to terms with. Coming out is a giant step as you don't know how people will react."

For Jane, 42, it was the reaction of other people that hurt most. Richard, now 17, first brought the subject up when he was ten. "We were on holiday and he asked me how someone might know if they were gay," she recalls. "When he asked me not to tell his dad, that set alarm bells ringing."

At 15, fed up with secrecy, Ri-



Alan and Marilyn Hodgkinson with their son Graeme

chard — against Jane's advice — confided in a few close friends. He felt they'd be sympathetic, but he was wrong. He'd been popular. Now he was beaten up, tormented and insulted. He became lonelier and lonelier. Eventually, he ran away. "When I found out where he was, the deputy head said that he'd put him in detention as soon as he returned to school," says Jane.

The school attendance officer also threatened me with a court order. I feel the system failed us in that they could not stop the bullying and would not understand what he was going through."

Jane feels that "clause 28" which prevents promoting homosexuality in schools has led to teachers being unwilling to tackle homophobia. Indeed, Richard's work suffered so badly that he left school with two GCSE's rather than the nine that had been forecast. "It's not acceptable to bully children because of their race and it shouldn't be acceptable to bully them because they are gay," says Jane.

While Richard's experience is horrifying, some young men find they experience a higher level of acceptance than anticipated. Richard Collumbell, now 20, was 16 when he came out to his father and step-mother. "At first they'd ask me every six months or so

whether I was still gay," he says. "My step-mother found it harder to come to terms with than my dad, who had a gay brother. She thought she was somehow to blame, which was weird. But they are fine about it now. I also go to Church and I thought that might be difficult, but people there don't just tolerate me, they accept me fully."

When Richard first brought a partner back, his parents thought he was just another friend and were surprised to learn he was Richard's boyfriend. However, they accepted having him to stay, although Richard points out they were unaware that the couple were actually committing a criminal offence.

Joy Dickens has no doubt that the decision by the House of Lords will make life more difficult for parents of gay youngsters.

"For those parents who accept their child, this will be an extra worry as their young sons will remain criminalised within the law. For parents who don't accept their child, this will just be additional ammunition to throw against them."

● Support For Parents of Gay Children includes: Parents' Friend (0113 267462); Parents Today (0181-650 5288); Acceptance, Helpline and Support Group (0195 661463)

"I felt like I'd been hit in the stomach with a rugby ball"

Respite for Chernobyl's youngest victims

Simon Brooke meets Byelorussia's children staying in East Sussex

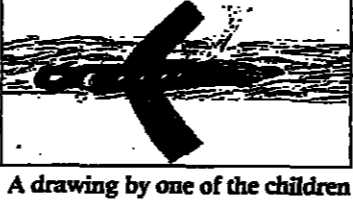
It's a waterfall I saw when I came to England," says Larysa Polkhouckaya, aged nine, when I ask her about her picture. For Larysa and her friends, the village hall at Iden, a pretty hamlet near Rye in East Sussex, which boasts a 12th-century church and a mention in the Domesday Book, is 15,000 miles away in distance and a million miles in almost every other respect, from their home town near Chernobyl in Belarus. Fortunately, drawing and painting is a universal obsession among children and they soon settle down to work, tongues curling in silent concentration.

Chernobyl is, of course, synonymous with the world's worst civil nuclear disaster and these children, although born three years or more after the event itself, still suffer the consequences. Frequently, when the wind blows from the direction of the reactor site over their homes, they cannot go to school and have to stay indoors. Other children in the area suffer thyroid problems, a lack of energy and general ill health because of radiation levels. Leukaemia is widespread and many women are afraid of having children in case they are born deformed.

For the past four years, a group of children has come from the Cher-



Larysa Polkhouckaya, currently staying in Rye, with her drawing



A drawing by one of the children

"The land around Chernobyl will remain radioactive for 20,000 years"

absolutely mad about potatoes," says Mrs Barnett. "They tried jacket potatoes once and it was like Christmas. It's quite humbling really." The children were, however, very wary of dairy produce, even refusing butter on bread.

Denise Gibbs, from Rye, who hosted some children last year, discovered that they adored fruit. "I was forever chopping up bananas and oranges. Bunches of grapes would disappear in one go. We took them to the local supermarket and I realised that they had never seen food stacked so high."

"Hamburgers, sausages and chips are very popular," says Mrs Waddams. "There are things like McDonald's near them at home but, like many things, they are comparatively expensive."

Cosmetics and toiletries are in short supply in Byelorussia. They are very keen to take back razors for their fathers and one girl, whose

English was almost non-existent, was able to say, "Mother cosmetics," adds Mrs Gibbs. A visit to the dentist, which is expensive in Byelorussia, was also arranged.

Gwen Tuck and her husband, Brian, who have two boys, Yuri and Dimitri, staying with them, have overcome the language barrier with a mixture of sign language, pictures and patience. They believe that the secret to success is to relax and remember that "children are children the world over."

Videos are especially popular since they hardly exist at home. "They love Disney videos, even though they don't understand the words," says Mrs Tuck. The region is considered to be about 50 years behind the West and the children's toys are more likely to be Meccano than Nintendo or Sega.

The boys enjoy playing in the garden. Many of the children live in flats and there are very few parks. Private gardens are often used for growing food. What about the risk of soil contamination, I ask Olga Kovalevko. "What else can we do?" she says.

The children's clothes are almost exactly what any child their age in the West would wear. But they have very few of them. "Yuri arrived in the clothes he stood up in, plus a pullover," says Gwen.

Even a short break away from the nuclear contamination can help restore the children's immune systems, but naturally food, Disney videos and parks are most important to the children. "Apparently," explains Mrs Gibbs, "back home 'Rye' means 'paradise.'"



Host parent Brian Tuck with Dimitri Zhuro and Yuri Jazovskii



THE TIMES WEEKEND · SATURDAY AUGUST 1 1998

Tending to his Borders



A sculpture by Lady Steel

Lord Steel likes to let weeds live, finds Jane Owen

Lord Steel of Aikwood's interest in gardening is aesthetic rather than practical as his wife, Judy, attests. "Once, when we were sitting in the garden, I said to David: 'Look, there is a weed growing up on the terrace beside your left foot. Please will you pull it out?' He simply said, 'No!'"

Lord Steel is unrepentant. "Once you start on that road there is no end," he says. "We don't divide the work in the garden because I don't do any. In our previous house I used to mow the lawn, but I don't here because it has to be perfect. It is contracted out now."

It is a small, immaculate walled garden created in 1991 by Louise Wall, who used a design and planting appropriate to the Steels' 16th-century tower house on the Scottish Borders. Two ornate garden chairs stand outside the pink-washed walls of the tower. "They are a joke. My employees gave me the chairs when I was retiring from the Commons — give the old man a seat because he is retiring — but the truth is that I am hardly ever in the garden," says Lord Steel, who is standing for election to the Scottish Parliament and is regarded as a frontrunner to be Speaker. He is sipping coffee at a large wooden table in his kitchen explaining how his life will be transformed if he is elected.

"Instead of being away during the week in London or abroad I will be more rooted here because we are an hour's drive from Edinburgh. The Scottish Parliament will sit at civilised hours so I can see myself having a much better, more comfortable lifestyle here and enjoying the garden." There is a pause.

The Steels are known for their unusual marriage which appears to work by him staying away most of the time. Will things really be so cosy and idyllic? He chortles. "The week I gave up being party leader instead of going down on the early morning Monday train I stayed here for lunch. My wife said: 'This is absolutely wonderful.' But half way through lunch, she looked up at me and said, 'You're not going to be here every Monday for lunch are you?' We fell about laughing."



Lord and Lady Steel in their spectacular laburnum allee, complete with tiny electric lights hooped around each arch for illumination at night

haven't, and so I think the same thing will happen again. If I were here all the time I would drive her round the bend."

As far as gardening goes, their traditions and expectations have little in common. She was brought up with a 15-acre garden and a father who breathed them. Lord Steel was brought up in a series of productive manse gardens.

His father was a minister for the Church of Scotland. "We had big gardens and on one we had to grow a lot of our own food and had hens and rabbits to eat. As little children we even had coats and gloves made out of rabbit skins. They were horrible. Slightly smelly. The large lawn was given over to hay for the animals. I am more interested in livestock in the garden. I'd like to have bantams. I like the look of them and it's fun to have your own eggs."

Lady Steel, who is orchestrating casserole pans on her Aga, grimaces. "I say all right if you are here but when we had animals last time I had to look after them. And bantams will scratch up all my nice wild flowers in the orchard." She is referring to their small wildflower meadow with naturalised bulbs planted with a few apples, including a 'White Melrose' which Lady Steel



The stunning tower house, left. Lady Steel, right, tends to an old variety of Danish rose

rates as a good eater, damsons, medlars, pear, crab apple and cob nut. There are cordons, too, whipped into submission by Lady Steel. The formal garden has been laid directly outside the tower with a square of lawn dotted with four Irish yews separated from the main terrace by a double lavender and rose walk. The roses are old varieties: *Rosa mundi* and *Rosa rugosa* 'Frau Dagmar Has-trap'. Herbs and wild strawberries erupt between the paving stones, some of which were used in Eyemouth to gut fish on. Their pinky surface still had a patina of fish oil when they were first laid.

The garden's most spectacular feature is laburnum allee, but not as we know it. Roll over Rosemary Verey. This one has tubes of tiny electric

lights hooped around each arch so that, at night, the yellow flowers — or the bare stems in winter — are lit along with the path below. Instead of an underplanting of alliums, as at La Verney's, this one laburnum allee is underplanted with frothing *Alchemilla mollis*. Two borders around the edge of the lawn undulate with juniper, holly, wormwood, broom, dogwood,

helleborus, thirt, yarrow, sage, spindle, bugle and Hawthorn, and a beech hedge separates this garden from the orchard. Every year Lady Steel, who is a poet and artist, holds a sculpture exhibition here.

The Steels had kept peacocks in their last garden and were expecting a pair when I interviewed them. When he wasn't making vague promises to brave the rain with his son, Rory, to go fishing, Lord Steel was fussing about whether or not the hut would be big enough for the birds.

The easy atmosphere and apparent domestic harmony at Aikwood comes as a surprise after reading press cuttings which suggest a bumpy family life. There was no sign of their adopted son, Billie, but their natural son, Graeme, who was jailed for nine months a few years ago for growing cannabis, is now a professional gardener who regularly helps at Aikwood. And, if Lord Steel needs a room in Edinburgh, he stays with his daughter, Catriona.

I leave the Steels as Rory, who has spent the interview replacing light bulbs, buttonholes his father again about going fishing.

● **Aikwood Garden, nr Selkirk**, is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, 3-5pm. Entrance costs £1.50 and includes entry to the James Hogg exhibition. Information on 01750 52253.

STEPHEN ANDERTON'S GARDEN ANSWERS



Q I have two ten-year-old hollies and have pruned back the side branches to make 6ft cylinders a yard across. Only one has berries, which it makes lower down the bush. I would like to change the shape to make holly balls on bare stems. How do I go about it, and can I keep the berries? — Mr J Hill, Ilkley, West Yorks

A At ten years old your hollies will be strong-trunked little trees, capable of supporting a ball head, so you can start now this year by cutting off the lower branches cleanly to the trunk. You will not be making major wounds, so you could take some lower ones off now and the rest in winter. This will spread the shock, and encourage growth at the top. Do it all in winter if you prefer.

Take off the branches to a point just a little higher than the bottom of the intended ball, so that twigs and foliage can grow downwards to form the bottom edge of the ball. Also shorten back or pinch the tips of the twigs and the leader within the future ball, so that they bush out and thicken their canopy. It should only take you two to three seasons to make a respectable ball. If, when you take off the side branches, you find double leaders, as is common in holly, leave them alone if they are within the height of the ball. If they arise lower down and will show below the ball, cut out the weaker, least central leader, even if it is quite big, to leave one trunk. Flowering and berrying will take a few years in the foliage of the ball. Too severe annual clipping can stop flowering altogether.



needs to turn its mind to procreation is some torrid, long, hot, Deep South summers. Israel is nearer the mark than Hertfordshire. Now you've got a yellowwood, do treasure it. It's not at all common in the wild.

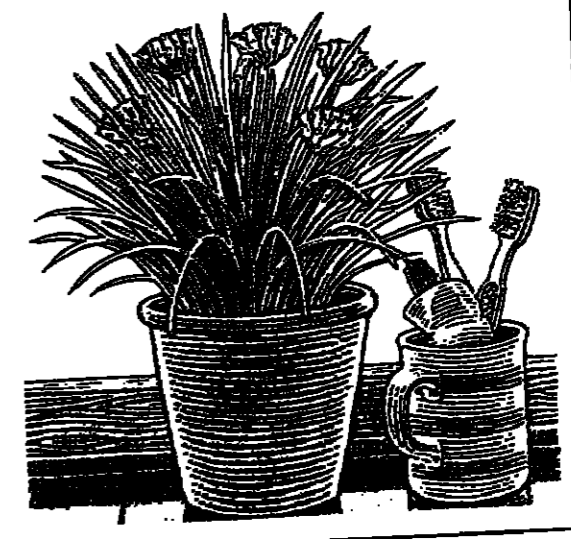
Q Twenty years ago we planted a Judas tree, *Cercis siliquastrum*, in our walled garden, grown from seed we collected in Israel. It is now 20ft high and 15ft across and growing fast, but it has never flowered or produced pods. What can we do, or is it a committed celibate? — B. Collins, Haris

A The leaf you sent me is not a Judas tree. Judas trees have simple, heart-shaped or apple-shaped

Q Can I bring in chives for use during the winter? — Mrs M Yale, Gillingham, Kent

A I don't see why not. Pot some up in September, and leave them out in the cold. Bring them in from December onwards, to somewhere cool and light. Hot kitchen window sills will produce fast, floppy growth and brief use.

● Write to Garden Answers, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, E1 9DN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. Enclosures cannot be returned.



Odd tomatoes and even odder pumpkins



The Growing Green Garden at Darlington, Co Durham and, right, a 19th-century scarecrow at the Quarry Bank Mill in Cheshire



THIS weekend has been named Organic Gardens weekend by Europe's largest organic research organisation, the Henry Doubleday Research Association. For details of organic gardens open at other times ring the HDRA: 01203 203517

■ **Yalding Organic Gardens** Benover Road, Yalding nr Maidstone, Kent (01622 814650). Open today and tomorrow 10am-5pm. £2.50, 6m NW of Yalding.

THIS is one of the HDRA's own gardens and it is designed with a series of plots tracing aspects of garden history. At this time of year the vegetables, many unusual varieties from the HDRA's Heritage Seed List, will be worth a look. There are unusual tomatoes and pumpkins in the late 19th-century 'artisan's garden': bedding at the front, an area which will be glassed over for

GARDENS TO VISIT

prize chrysanthemums in the middle and a vegetable plot at the back. There is a 13th-century apothecary's garden, a paradise garden, a cottage garden, an Edwardian herbaceous border and a 1950s allotment.

■ **The Apprentice House Garden** Quarry Bank Mill, Spal, Wilmslow, Cheshire (01625 527468). Open today and tomorrow, 11am-5pm and every day except term-time Mondays. Free, apart from car parking which is £2. Signed 'Quarry Bank Mill' from JS of the MS&S. HEAD gardener Pat Brittan is in despair about her one acre of vegetables, soft fruit, herbs and poultry which is run by and supplies unusual seed to the HDRA. "It is not

tidy or ornamental. It has been a bad season," she says. But the garden is a fascinating record of early 19th-century history: the original was made in 1800 to feed work-house children brought in from the cities to work in the cotton mills.

■ **Growing Green** Low Walworth Market Garden, Walworth, Darlington, Co Durham (01325 362466). Open today and tomorrow 10am-5pm. Free. No smoking or dogs. 4m NW of Darlington.

THESE six acres set in rolling countryside are an ongoing experiment in sustainability and vegetable production without the use of animal manures. The co-operative that runs the gardens produces boxes of organic vegetables for up to 150 people a year.

JANE OWEN

A perfectly lousy problem

Woodlice like the damp and debris of greenhouses. Sue Corbett asks the experts how they can be curbed

Who likes woodlice? Not me when they use my bedroom floor as their parade ground. Nor does John Davison of East Presto, West Sussex, when these little crustaceans take to the high wire in his greenhouse in order to nibble his orchids' aerial roots.

"I hate the little beasts," he says. "Although they don't seem to bother about the majority of my orchids, those they like are generally the ones where it's critical to make sure the root system gets a good start, like one beautiful Mexican species, which I normally keep hanging from the roof on a piece of wire. One morning I left it on a bench by mistake and, when I came back in the evening, the growing tip of every single one of the new roots had been gnawed back to the covering

membrane that develops as they grow. I know it was woodlice because they were still around, and I was surprised because I'd read that they don't cause any problems.

"Even when I have a wire grid hanging from the roof with plants hooked on to it, the woodlice crawl along the beams and down the grid: some of them must have been trained by the SAS. I'm also pretty certain they eat the flowers. As a preventative, I don't like using insecticides but at the first sign of trouble I give plants a drenching of melathion to keep the woodlice at bay."

Woodlice like damp and they like decaying debris, which is why they congregate in well-watered greenhouses where busy gardeners don't have time to pick every dead leaf off the floor. In the experience of Mr Davison's neighbour, Roy Smith,



John Davison in his greenhouse, where he fights a battle against woodlice which attack his orchids

who also grows orchids, they seem to relish fir bark and moss composts, too. "There are powders you can put down," he says, "but they can make the plants look a mess, and anything that lodges in the centre can cause crown rot. I use methio-carb slug pellets against woodlice."

Woodlice adore all the mulch and organic matter of the typical organic garden, and the Henry Doubleday Research Association (HDRA) is often asked if there is a good organic solution to the crustacean pests.

"There's no magic answer," admits a spokeswoman for the HDRA's information department, "except to remove any debris that could provide shelter, such as pots or boxes, heaps of wood or stones. But you can encourage them to congregate where you want by clearing everything away and putting down an overturned flowerpot or a box for a while. Then you just sweep the woodlice up from underneath. Dried blood, cooked potato and grated cheese will also attract them in

numbers. Another suggestion, if your plants are on a bench, is to put a greaseband on each leg to stop them climbing up."

The HDRA spokeswoman points out that, although one of her colleagues has observed woodlice of all sizes chomping away at healthy tomatoes, the evidence against them is more often circumstantial. "Go into a greenhouse at night, turn on the torch and there are woodlice everywhere, but it's always worth considering other culprits. Ragged holes in



The culprit that is hard to beat



Woodlice damage to tomatoes



- Make sure runner beans have plenty of water at all times to keep them large, tender and plentiful. Give them liquid feed in the form of a high-potash tomato fertiliser. Pick them regularly to keep them cropping.
- Make sure borders and vegetable rows are well hoed and weeded before you go on holiday.
- Large container-grown plants which have been recently planted out will be at risk from drying out while you are away. Soak them with a hose, and give them a mulch of bark, old compost, or even newspaper to reduce moisture loss from the soil.
- Cut the dead heads off buddleias to improve the look and size of the next flowers being produced further back on the stems.
- As large dahlias gain height, give them secure stakes tall enough to take them through to the end of the season.

HOMES & GARDENS

TO ADVERTISE IN THIS SECTION TELEPHONE ZOE HOSKINS ON 0171 680 6116 OR FAX ON 0171 782 7930

The automatic choice for garage doors

- Easily operated from the comfort of your car
- Pocket size remote control
- Safer and more secure
- Long lasting tough durable finish
- Maintenance free
- Choice of colours
- Made to measure
- Powered by SOMFY World leader in roll-up garage door automation

Special concessions for the Disabled Driver

...Life just became a little easier

0800 919845

or fill in and post the coupon - no postage required to: A1 POWER DOORS FREEPOST NW 11051 BOLTON BL1 3ZZ

At the touch of a button...

Special concessions for the Disabled Driver

...Life just became a little easier

0800 919845

or fill in and post the coupon - no postage required to: A1 POWER DOORS FREEPOST NW 11051 BOLTON BL1 3ZZ

Climate control for all types of conservatories

Reduce the heat in your conservatory by up to 30 degrees

Deflected Heat

EXTERIOR CONSERVATORY BLINDS

Heat is deflected before reaching your conservatory

Guaranteed ease of use with manual or electric operation

Ask about our Awnings

Make a FREE call for a FREE brochure

0500 11 11 00

Northern Office 0500 211 311

Millennium Freepost Colchester CO4 4ZZ

ECHO

All the power of a two stroke Brushcutter - without mixing it!

A 2 stroke engine is much the best for strimming and brushcutting - lighter, more powerful and longer lasting. But what about the bother of mixing the fuel in the right proportions? The new Echo self lubricating Brushcutters do it for you. Just fill the oil reservoir and it will last for ten petrol fills - proportioning and injecting the oil into the engine. You get the world class performance and long lasting quality of an Echo Strimmer/Brushcutter and no bother!

To get details, prices and the name of your nearest dealer clip the coupon or

PHONE FREE 0500 279927

To: Countax, Echo BC brochures, FREEPOST, Great Haseley, Oxford OX44 7BR

Name: _____ Tel: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel: _____

COUNTAX

www.countax.com

SEPTIC TANKS

LIQUID BIO FLO is a bacterial product that cleanses cesspits and reduces emptyings. For details of SPECIAL OFFER send S.A.E. to Pilsford Brook, Dept J, FREEPOST, Hampshire, SO33 5EE or FREEPHONE 0500 100 174 (9.30-5.30)

RANGE COOKERS

BRITANNIA/SMAG DOOR LAGANES FIVE STAR & BONAIRE

ADRIAL & MAYTAG REFRIGERATION & LAUNDRY SYSTEMS

TOP DISCOUNTS

HAT DELIVERIES, INSTALLATION, WARRANTIES & SERVICE

Tel: 01225 769027

DEVON OKE DESIGNS

EIGHT SEATER OCTAGONAL TABLE & CHAIRS COMBINED AS ONE UNIT?

Walk in Access, no climbing over benches. Variable seating options. 3 metre Knightsbridge Green Plantation Umbrella

£510.82 INCLUSIVE

FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND BROCHURE, DEVON OKE DESIGNS, HONEYBEAM COTTAGE, WEARE GIFFARD, BIDEFORD, DEVON, EX39 4QT

TEL: 01805 622509

TRIM AND MOW THE EASY WAY

Forget the hard work of conventional hand-held trimmers, let the unique wheel mounted DR Trimmer/Mower do the work for you.

It has the power and manoeuvrability to trim and mow anywhere. Handling tough and awkward jobs like grass or bracken up to 36" high - even when wet and on slopes up to 50°.

DR TRIMMER/MOWER

For brochures, stockies and special offer details contact Dept. ST, Charwoman Turf Machinery Ltd, FREEPOST, (GL2289), Bicester, Oxon, OX11 3JN. Tel: 01298 661222. Fax: 01298 661218.

TRIMS AND MOWS IN ONE

CALL FOR FREE BROCHURE 01428 661222 (24 HRS)

Announcing the SENSATIONAL SUPERIOR and SENSIBLY PRICED NEW SUPER SOVEREIGN SCOOTER NEW from SHOPRIDER to enhance your mobility and independence

Ideal for use in the GARDEN, going to LIBRARY, CHURCH, SHOPS, to visit FRIENDS or just to get some FRESH AIR.

DRIVING LICENCE, ROAD TAX & MOT are NOT required.

Ongoing MAINTENANCE & SUPPORT facilities.

For details, please telephone: **HOMECARE MOBILITY: 01442 879116** OR please send off this Reply Coupon TODAY for more details.

To: 7N/982, HOMECARE MOBILITY CENTRES, 32, ASHLYNS ROAD, BERRHAMPTON, HERTS, HP4 3BL.

Please send SHOPRIDER details to: _____ TEL NO: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POST CODE: _____

MAIL ORDER SCREWS FIXINGS & TOOLS

EVERYTHING FOR TRADE & DIY 24 HOURS NATIONWIDE DELIVERY.

SCREWFIX

FREE 0800 317 004

Scrawfix Direct, FREEPOST, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 8BF

JUST ZAPP

YOUR GARAGE DOORS OPEN

FREE FITTING LIMITED OFFER

POWERED BY SOMFY MOTORS

Imagine the convenience and security of being able to open your garage doors without having to get out of your car.

- Made from tough, maintenance-free aluminium.
- Durable stove-enamelled finish.
- In a range of colours.
- Automatic Locking.
- Tailor made for a perfect fit.
- Fully installed by Guardian's own craftsmen.
- High Security.

FOR A FREE BROCHURE RING **01484 461010** NORTH SOUTH 0171 581 4443

OR RETURN THE COUPON BELOW WITHOUT OBLIGATION

FREEPOST - SEND TODAY - NO STAMP REQUIRED

Post to: GUARDIAN GARAGE DOORS, TT1868 FREEPOST, MFD 118, HUDDERSFIELD, HD3 3LL

NAME/MS/MRS _____

TELEPHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____

GUARDIAN

YOUR PROPERTY PROTECTOR

4 STROKES... 1 PULL

The revolutionary new Sunward 22 brushcutter from Allen is powered by a 22cc Honda 4 stroke engine and comes complete with nylon line cutting head and metal brush blade.

- reduces light work of heavy growth
- 50% less petrol than a 2 stroke engine
- less noise pollution • cleaner exhaust engine cuts at any angle without stalling

PHONE THE 24 HOUR BROCHURE LINE NOW ON AND THIS ORDER WITH YOUR ADDRESS & PHONE NO TO THE ADDRESS BELOW

0845 60 10 815

Huge Reductions on Awnings!

We make and fit them all. Any position. Any size.

All direct from manufacturer prices. Save 22% on our unbeatable selection of styles and colours.

All best quality. All guaranteed 5 years.

UP TO 50% OFF Selected ranges of T&C Conservatory Blinds. Order now and we pay the VAT on all our conservatory blinds.

OFFER MUST END 31st August '98

We are probably the largest domestic awning company in the UK and the only company with a showroom where our huge range can be viewed.

Awnings & Conservatory • Conservatory • Sunblinds • Window Blinds • Roof Blinds

For your FREE colour catalogue and our FREE design service and quotation, call this number today: **0945 023980**

Runs to 9pm - 7 days a week.

Order NOW for Summer holidays and have fun with the children. A fraction of the price of a conventional pool. Rigid free standing pool. Tough UV PVC liner. Pump, ladders, filter included. 12 month guarantee. 3.5m dia. 0.9m high NOW ONLY **£274** 2.5m dia. 0.9m high NOW ONLY **£374**

To order or for brochure Ring now **01747 861642**

VISA ACCESS MASTERCARD **HAXNICKS** Mapperton Hill, Mere, Wiltshire BA12 6LH

HARD WATER

Scientific solutions for home, garden and leisure

Our Promise: soft water or your money back!

Soft water in the home Krystal - first in the market and still the best!

- Advanced computer technology with automatic 24-hour, 365-day programme
- Compact size means installation is never a problem - even in the smallest spaces
- Universal performance - Regardless of local water conditions

Line scale problems? Krystal can treat the whole house for less than £200!

Hard-water hands? Krystal can give you full soft-water benefits

Clogged-up shower heads? Krystal can keep them clean and clear

Stains in the bath? Not with Krystal!

Fit Krystal yourself - NO plumbing, NO maintenance, NO chemicals and less than £2 a year to run.

softwater benefits for caravans & boats

Krystal Ranger

Weighs in at 12V or 24V with battery

Specially tailored for motorhome systems

Draws less power than a single bulb

Clear algae from pond water

Pond Sweeper

Fit to fit in existing system

Eliminates 70% of algae

Formaldehyde free - nutrient uptake of water plants. Complete with outdoor cable

For the hydroponics gardener

Hydro Tek

Proven in leading horticultural laboratories. Enhances mineral uptake and nutrient efficiency. Lower PPM levels mean less disease, rot and insecticide use

Clean, sparkling swimming pools

Bright Water

Designed to remove high volumes. Cuts up to 100% of inhibiting organic matter

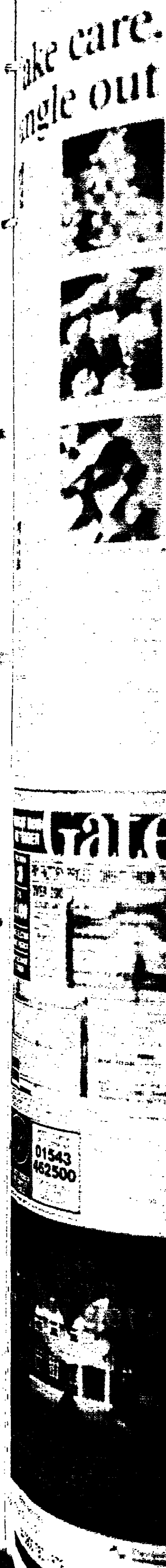
All our products are guaranteed for FIVE YEARS

Call Free **0800 590050** Lines open 24 hours, 7 days

Customers in Eire call 1800 204 704

Clearflow Ltd, 47-49 High St, Haverford, Berks RG17 0NE. Tel: 01488 687806 Fax: 01488 685411 e-mail: info@clearflow.co.uk

TRADE and OVERSEAS enquiries welcome



About 4,000 babies and toddlers are poisoned by plants each year. Lois Letts discovers which flowers can be fatal to your family

Take care, it's a jungle out there

HOW SAFE is the garden for babies and toddlers? This spring I found my infant son,

then eight months, sucking on a hyacinth leaf. The poisons unit at the hospital calmly said that while hyacinths are mildly poisonous — as are many garden plants — there was nothing to worry about. He might develop a stomach ache, and I should give him plenty of liquid.

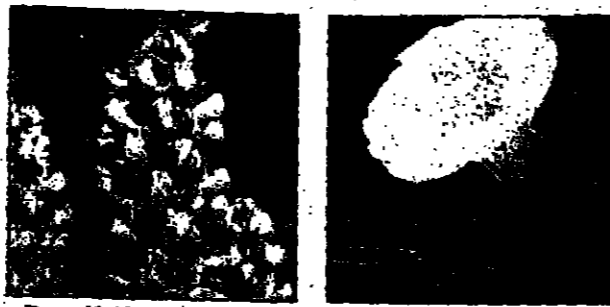
Since then Claud has taken to "helping" in the garden and most things that come his way are given an exploratory chew. This includes slugs and colourful flowers.

About 5,000 people in Britain are poisoned by plants every year, making them the third most common cause of poisoning after household chemicals and medicines. Eighty per cent of those poisoned by plants are babies and toddlers. While being encouraged to enjoy the garden, children should be taught as early as possible not to eat flowers and plants. Knowing which plants are seriously poisonous can avert the need for that dash to the hospital.

ANY LIST of poisonous plants grown commonly in British gardens would include

angel's trumpets, yew, daphne, laburnum, lupin, colchicum, hellebore, euphorbia and foxglove. Even the flowers of common spring bulbs such as daffodils and tulips can be poisonous. The toxic bulbs of daffodils, if they are to be stored over the winter, can be clearly labelled to avoid confusion with small onions. Seed packets should be handy for details of toxicity, and the highly-poisonous seeds of some plants such as morning glory are best stored well away from small fingers.

One of the nastiest plants is the common foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*). Everything



Beautiful but poisonous: the lupin and the datura, right



Both euphorbia and daphne, right, are skin irritants



Foxglove, left, and yews are two of the nastiest plants

about it attracts childish imagination, from the soft velvety leaves to its very name (which derives from fairy folk's gloves).

All of us can remember being encouraged to poke our fingers into the small flowers when we were little. So long as the child washes his hands afterwards, there seems no harm in continuing the practice, but on no account should the child be allowed to eat any part of the plant. It contains digoxin, a powerful cardiac stimulant. If eaten in large enough quantities it can kill. Not for nothing is this plant known as Dead Man's

Thimbles in Ireland and animals instinctively avoid it. Another common danger is the laburnum. Its seeds are contained in pods which are ideal for children to use as pretend pea pods (as are the less dangerous but still toxic pods of lupin and sweet peas). A colleague of mine remembers eating the "fairy peas" of laburnum as a child and having her stomach pumped. Fortunately, by the time children are old enough to reach up to gather laburnum pods they should be able to understand that the tree is off limits.

Many poisonous plants contain drugs which have been



Budding gardeners: Humphrey Barker and Claud Letts, both aged one, tuck into dahlias

used for centuries. The English cottage garden evolved from the medieval monastery garden, which was used as a herb- dispensary for villagers. Ingredients in the root of the Christmas rose (*Helleborus niger*), for instance, will act upon the heart in a similar way to foxglove. It was once considered useful as a laxative and diuretic but it should not be used without medical supervision.

Another plant used by old apothecaries is euphorbia, its common name is "spurge" (from the Latin *expurgare*, to purge out) which gives a clue to its forceful effect on the bowels. This is not one to

experiment with at home: it seems that Romans would have tried anything. The toxic sap of euphorbia can also cause a painful blister or rash.

SO, TOO, can the leaves of the harmless-looking primula.

Among wild plants, the two most deadly are monkshood (*Aconitum napellus*) and deadly nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*). Monkshood grows in woods, scrubland and mountain pastures and contains the highly poisonous alkaloid aconitine, which is used in many

medicines. Deadly nightshade, as L.P. Hartley recognised in *The Go-Between*, has long been held in gruesome wonderment by children. Until recently it was widely cultivated across Britain because it contained some useful drugs, atropine and hyoscyamine. The sweet berries are fatal to children.

The plant is now a rare sight in Britain but parents should not panic if they think they have seen deadly nightshade growing in a hedgerow. It is more likely to be the less-dangerous woody nightshade, which also has purple flowers followed in autumn by berries.



Claud samples a harmless hosta among toxic plants

COMMON POISONOUS PLANTS

- B Brugmansia datura** (Angels' Trumpets): all parts severely toxic if eaten.
- Colchicum autumnale** (Autumn Crocus): all parts severely toxic if eaten. May also cause skin reaction.
- Daphne**: All parts severely toxic, particularly seed. Sap causes burn-like skin reaction.
- Digitalis purpurea** (Foxglove): Extremely poisonous if any part eaten. Foliage can cause skin irritation.
- Euphorbia (Spurge)**: Mildly toxic if eaten. Sap causes skin and eye reaction.
- Helleborus niger** (Christmas Rose): All parts toxic, particularly if eaten fresh. Sap causes rash.
- Ipomoea (Morning Glory)**: Seeds very toxic. Laburnum: All parts severely toxic, particularly seeds.
- Ladybird odoratus** (Sweet Pea): All parts toxic, particularly seeds.
- Lupinus (Lupin)**: All parts toxic, particularly seeds.
- Narcissus (Daffodil)**: All green parts are poisonous, and so is the bulb.
- Primula**: Leaves can cause allergic skin reaction.
- Taxus (Yew)**: All parts severely toxic if eaten.
- Tulipa (Tulip)**: All parts toxic if eaten, particularly bulbs.

WILD POISONOUS PLANTS

- Atropa belladonna** (Deadly Nightshade): All parts severely poisonous. Black berries may be fatal.
- Aconitum napellus** (Monkshood): All parts severely toxic, particularly roots. Foliage may cause skin irritation.

Those of the woody nightshade are red, those of deadly nightshade black.

Plants are not the only danger to small children in the garden. Slug pellets may look blue and pretty but they contain metaldehyde, which can kill if eaten.

Hostas, and other plants which are a particular prey to slugs and snails, might be more safely protected by a liberal dose of sharp sand around the emerging leaves in late spring or (the old remedy) a saucer of beer placed nearby during the summer months. Parents whose child has eaten an unfamiliar plant should

take heart from new medical developments. In 1995, as part of their Nightshade Project, Kew Gardens produced a CD-ROM for doctors which cuts identification time down to a few minutes.

But for those hospitals not equipped with the latest software, Dr Charlotte Canniff recommends bringing in the whole plant with the child, not just the leaf or the berries. "Droves of parents come into the emergency department clutching a child and a leaf, we then have to flick through vast botany books to identify the plant. Anything to speed up the search will help."

CRAFTSMAN MADE QUALITY GUARANTEED

WROUGHT IRON AND TIMBER Gates

PRICES FROM £20 UP TO £2,000

PAY FACTORY PRICES - DIRECT FROM THE FACTORY

OVER 200 DESIGNS AND SIZES TO SUIT ALL TYPES OF PROPERTY

WE ARE BRITAIN'S LARGEST DIRECT MANUFACTURER OF GATES. NO RETAILER CAN BEAT OUR PRICES, QUALITY, SERVICE AND SELECTION.

SEND FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE SHOWING OUR EXTENSIVE RANGE

CANNOCK GATES LIMITED (DEPT TT2295) HAWKS GREEN, CANNOCK, STAFFS, WS11 2XT

VISITORS WELCOME at our Factory Shop and Display Garden. Open 7 days a week, Monday to Saturday 9am-5pm. Sunday 10am-4pm.

POST COUPON OR TELEPHONE 01543 462500 FOR YOUR FREE COLOUR CATALOGUE

UK'S LARGEST PRODUCER & DIRECT SUPPLIER OF GATES

ALTON GREENHOUSES

SPECIAL OFFERS

- Great Western Red Cedar
- craftsmen design and build
- 10 year frame guarantee
- Free delivery

FOR DETAILS OF SPECIAL PRICES & BROCHURE PHONE FREE ON 0800 9756606

or write to: Alton Greenhouses (Dept. L1-6), Peppert (L10) Peppert Close, Leamington Spa CV32 2BB.

"With a Churchill's Scooter I don't have to lose my independence"

Free home trial • Maintenance free
Anybody can ride - no driving license

Call Churchill's 0800 371 982

Call FREE now and ask for Christine. Check or Angle for a FREE home consultation 7 DAYS A WEEK 9AM-6PM

Non-refundable 7 day service

CALL NOW FOR YOUR FREE PORTABLE COLOUR TV WITH ALL CABLES THIS MONTH

Churchill's

HOMES & GARDENS

Churchill's are the only stairlift company I trust and I thoroughly recommend them to you"

Call Churchill's 0800 371 982

Call FREE now and ask for Christine. Check or Angle for a FREE home consultation 7 DAYS A WEEK 9AM-6PM

Churchill's Stairlifts are THE STAIRLIFT EXPERTS

GARAGES - SPECIAL PRICES

BEST BETTER CHOICE & QUALITY

BETTER GUARANTEE

BETTER SERVICE

MAINTENANCE FREE AND FREE DELIVERY

FOR FREE BROCHURE 25 YEARS

01295 770873

SCATTER Clears Cats

from your garden NIGHT AND DAY, EVERY DAY

Unique programme of computer-controlled ultrasound expels cats from lawns, flower beds, strawberries, walls and paths

Scatter transmits random bursts of ultrasound at a frequency that cats avoid. They'll turn away long before they expose themselves to its full impact, so that it works where fences or netting fail. Fully automatic - no sensors to go wrong. Highly reliable, fully weatherproofed miniature computer circuit.

SWITCH between low-voltage mains or battery operation at will NO effect on birds or other pets INADVISABLE to humans Scatter is completely safe. Installed in minutes. Try it for 90 days - 5 year guarantee

FREEPHONE 0800 282824 FOR FREE BROCHURE

Customers in Eire call 1800 204 304

Clearlaw Ltd, 47-48 High St, Humberford, Berks RG17 0NE
Tel: 01488 887806 Fax: 01488 885411
e-mail: info@clearlaw.co.uk

Free advice and a copy of "Your Guide to Gate Automation"

Perimeter

0800 783 1978

Change the face of your Kitchen

Our new colour brochure reveals a range of beautiful doors and drawer fronts in solid woods, laminates and painted finishes. From design to installation we think you'll be amazed at what Kitchen Magic can do for you.

is your kitchen old, worn out or just plain boring? Discarding the whole kitchen is an outdated, messy, inconvenient and extremely expensive idea. Over the past decade Kitchen Magic have transformed thousands of old kitchens into luxury built-in kitchens for a fraction of the price you would expect to pay if starting from scratch. Retaining the existing cabinets, we totally and professionally refurbish every aspect of each kitchen—replacing doors, drawer fronts and worktops. We enlarge or change the shape by adding new units and top name appliances. There is no compromise on quality, choice or design but huge benefits in time and outlay.

24 HOUR BROCHURE SERVICE 0121 622 6633

Phone or write NOW For the Kitchen Magic Brochure

Please send me Kitchen Magic's New Colour Brochure.
Name Mr / Mrs / Ms
Address
Post Code
Day Tel. Eve Tel.

POST TO: KITCHEN MAGIC, FREEPOST BM4819 BIRMINGHAM B1 1SR

WATER home, garden and leisure

01484 461010

500050



Andrew Byrne in his nearly-completed drawing room holds an impost block with a Greek pattern which the Spitalfields Trust uncovered

We decide if you can be trusted with this house

Not just anyone can buy a house from the conservation society charged with protecting the Georgian terraces of Spitalfields, East London. The Spitalfields Trust, it seems, operates a vetting policy which makes sure that only the right kind of buyer exchanges on the handful of houses it sells each year.

It is all very unofficial, but administrator Andrew Byrne confirms that the Trust approaches suitable candidates who know their pedigree from their pedigree.

"We avoid people who would muck around with a panelled Georgian house and accept that there are conflicts with people who don't understand old buildings," says Mr Byrne. "We like to meet the people at the house and ensure that they will preserve it."

The Trust is quietly negotiating with Simon Thurley, scholar and director of the Museum of London, over one of its houses. Neither the Trust nor Mr Thurley would reveal the price of the property Mr Thurley and his girlfriend Katherine Goodson, a milliner, wish to buy. The listed Grade II* building at Stepney Green is one of the finest

Societies that protect Georgian buildings are powerful and fussy about who lives in them, says Rachel Kelly

17th-century houses in London. It was built in 1690 and still has its original interiors, all 25 of them. The upper floor will be converted to make seven to eight bedrooms.

The Trust bought the house from a developer and is selling it almost immediately. "It was an expensive house for us to buy and expensive for Mr Thurley to buy too," says Mr Byrne. But this is a world where Mr Thurley will presumably relish the prospect of helping to fund a charity charged with preserving the best of our East London heritage.

But we are not all Simon Thurleys. Other buyers have less leverage for preservation and more desire for change. They see amenity societies, local authority conservation officers and council planners as arcane purists, out of touch with the reality of modern needs.

Michael Wade, 44, owns Trafalgar Park, a Wiltshire stately home, and has spent months dealing with

the Georgian Group. Negotiations are now at stalemate over renovations to the £1 million property he bought three years ago.

His initial plan was to turn the mid-18th-century house into a centre for music with an auditorium inside the derelict north wing and accommodation for himself and his wife in the south wing.

The Georgian Group responded with a report stating that it could not condone the destruction of such rooms which were of "international importance".

The north wing has not been used since the Second World War and it remains closed because of the Georgian Group's opposition. Mr Wade has secured the rotten roof and floor but is prohibited from renovating it for practical use. He also had to spend a further £40,000 on architect's fees for drawing up new plans. He says: "The Georgian Group can only object to things and don't see it within their

role to suggest alternatives. They would say that they don't have the budget. I would reply that if they wish to be a statutory consultancy body, they should have the budget. If they object to something they should be obliged to make counter proposals." The Georgian Group says it has an annual budget of £25,000 and can't afford to do this.

John Neal, of the Georgian Group, says: "Mr Wade wants to gut the north wing. That can hardly be described as renovation. The wing contains one of the earliest examples of Nicholas Revett's Greek revival architecture. In fairness, no one knew that before he moved there. We suggested that he build a modest opera house to the north of the main building."

Conservation societies need to adapt, says Mr Wade. "Great estates used to be supported by agriculture and inherited wealth. These societies should consider that any great building nowadays has to refocus its ability to earn an income."

Peter Janney is another historic building owner who sees amenity societies as a mixed blessing. The 63-year-old owner of The Temple of



Michael Wade with an architect's model of his auditorium. "Conservation societies need to adapt"

Diana, a Grade I listed building in Weston Park, Staffordshire, is unwilling to admit how much he paid for a 14-year lease on the property that has been converted from a dairy into a home, but the Georgian Group was influential in renovations. Mr Janney says: "They helped and criticised. They brought round a painter who was a complete nitwit. They do produce very helpful pamphlets though and prevent people from destroying ancient buildings."

Perhaps the best approach is a mixture of old and new. Dave Burton Pye, conservation officer for Weston Park, says: "My philosophy is not to say 'no' but to say 'yes

and let's get it right'. Buildings have changed and it's unrealistic to say they can't. The principle is to maintain their character."

Those wishing to avoid tortuous negotiations, says Mr Burton Pye, should use a good architect familiar with historic buildings. "Use a contractor used to handling listed buildings. And thirdly, use traditional materials, not just for the appearance, but the structure too."

And this is where the amenity societies offer a constructive service in the pamphlets they provide. The 15 advisory leaflets published by the Georgian Group are aimed at the house owner and cover every detail, from brickwork to wall-

paper, fireplaces to curtains, to ensure that the result is the perfect Georgian interior.

The leaflets not only provide practical guidelines and the basic dos and don'ts but a brief history of the development of their subject. Illustrations and lists of "essential" further reading are also included in the package.

All this helpful advice does not, however, come free. Each leaflet costs £2.75 and the avid Georgian decorator would have to fork out £41.80 for the whole set.

© The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, 0171-371 1644; Georgian Group, 0171-337 1700; Spitalfields Trust 0171-251 0911.

The end of the affair



TO ADVERTISE CALL: 0171 481 1986 (TRADE)

PROPERTY

071 481 4000 (PRIVATE) FAX: 0171 782 7828 0171 782 7799

NORTH OF THE THAMES

MANSIONS Representatives and featured for quick sale young Capital Property Limited, drive from 10am-10pm. 0171 588 0288

MAYS WATER Queens Ct, 2 bed 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

BRICK GREEN 174 Demerest, 3 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 602 0640

EMLING Channing 2 bed Widdowson house of excellent character, excellent location, excellent views. 0171 602 0640

MANSION 2 bed 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

MANSION 2 bed 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

MANSION 2 bed 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

SOUTH OF THE THAMES

MANSION 2 bed 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

MANSION 2 bed 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

MANSION 2 bed 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

MANSION 2 bed 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

MANSION 2 bed 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

MANSION 2 bed 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

FULHAM

CHATEAU Large detached 3 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

PETERBOROUGH Secure Home, 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

WIMBLEDON 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

MAYFAIR 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

CUMBRIA 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

DEVON 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

DORSET 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

HERTFORDSHIRE 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

ISLE OF WIGHT 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

KENT 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

NORFOLK 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

OXFORDSHIRE 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

SCOTTISH ISLES 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

SUFFOLK 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

SURREY 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

SUSSEX 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

PROPERTY

071 481 4000 (PRIVATE) FAX: 0171 782 7828 0171 782 7799

BEWLEY HOMES

Enbourne House
Wentworth Estate, Surrey
Mansion House set in 3.5 acres with 6 bedroom suites, enclosed pool area, triple garage block and staff accommodation.
Price: £3.5 million
Tel: 01344 624732

Kingsmere
Putney, SW15
Substantial 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, three storey detached flexible accommodation in Howards Lane, Putney.
Price: £1.5 million
Tel: 0181 946 0026

CITY & WEST END

ST PAUL'S ROAD
4 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

CITY 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

WEST END 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

ST PAUL'S 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

CITY 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

WEST END 2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

PROPERTY

071 481 4000 (PRIVATE) FAX: 0171 782 7828 0171 782 7799

PROPERTY

071 481 4000 (PRIVATE) FAX: 0171 782 7828 0171 782 7799

Available Soon

- Winkfield Place, N. Windsor, Berkshire - 8 1/2 acres, 4 & 2 bedroom apartments, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft. 01753 832888
- Thameside Court, Wokingham, Hampshire - 2 bedrooms, 1 & 2 bedrooms, 1 & 2 bedrooms, 1 & 2 bedrooms. 01753 832888
- Ascott, Berkshire - 4 & 2 bedroom detached apartments, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft. 01753 832888
- Wimbolden, Surrey - 2 bedroom apartments, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft. 01753 832888
- Milton, Wiltshire - 2 bedroom detached houses, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft. 01753 832888

For further details on sites without phone numbers please call 01256 840074 during office hours - 9am - 6pm

Available Now

- Shepperton, Bucks - 3 & 2 bedroom detached houses, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft. 01753 832888
- Burton, Wiltshire - 2 bedroom detached houses, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft. 01753 832888
- Colfax, Wiltshire - 2 bedroom detached houses, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft. 01753 832888
- Wimbolden, Surrey - 2 bedroom detached houses, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft, 200 sq ft. 01753 832888

Sales Offices Open Daily from 10.00am to 5.00pm - www.bewley.co.uk

CITY, DOCKLANDS & EAST

SPITALFIELDS
2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

DULWICH
2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

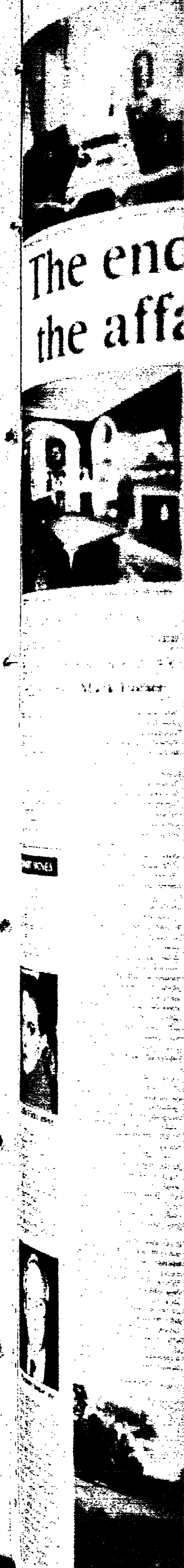
DOCKLANDS
2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

EAST
2 bed, 2 bath, 2nd floor, 2nd floor, 2nd floor. 0171 724 9919

MONKS REST PANORAMIC COASTAL VIEWS AT WESTON-SUPER-MARE

Price Range £235,000 - £295,000
Phone for brochure 01934 624 041

Developers & Builders





The south-facing morning room has fine plasterwork and an enclosed cupboard



The 18th-century house has ten bedrooms within a classical English façade. Mr de Savary says: "Bathealton is more than a house — it is a love affair"

The end of the affair



The games room and study has a full wall of bookcases

Peter de Savary is selling Bathealton Court, his 132-acre estate on the Devon/Somerset border, for £2 million, writes Mark Porter

Peter de Savary's house is, as you would imagine, run in shipshape fashion. Nothing is out of place. The trees are in perfect nick. The gravel on the drive looks new and freshly scrubbed. The lawn is immaculate. You get the impression that dust, if it dared, would gather in deserted ranks. In short, everything is as tidy as the beard that has long

adorned the plutocratic chin. But then this is no ordinary house. This is an exceptional 18th-century jewel of a country pile, set in 132 acres of prime Somerset parkland. Precisely the sort of place you would imagine the colourful yachtsman-entrepreneur to hang his bespoke hat. Bathealton Court is an estate agent's dream. And a pipe-dream for most of us: it is on the market for £2 million.

The place is a cheery house full of women and young girls. Peter de Savary has five daughters, three aged 11 and under by his current marriage. The other two, in their mid-twenties, often visit at weekends. This means that de Savary is outnumbered by as many as eight to one if Brian, the valet, gardener and general factotum, is on his annual day off.

It is nonetheless a manly house, one redolent of after-shave rather than perfume. Gun magazines and business journals adorn the coffee tables and cloakrooms. The dining room is a hearty setting, one that has seen more barons of beef than *flamiches aux potreaux*.

Over the deep-tiled brick-backed fireplace with its lacquered surround hangs an elegant portrait of a racehorse. The room, with an impressive plasterwork ceiling, is sunny since it faces due south, and in the corner there is an improbable pair of Doric columns.

De Savary is selling Bathealton, where he has lived intermittently for the past three years, and expanding his domestic empire on to Dartmoor in Devon. He is also buying a huge tract of wilderness in South Carolina.

Bathealton Court was built at the beginning of the 18th century. Every room has blatant reminders of the owner: newspaper clippings and photographs of him, impeccably framed, hang from every wall.

Bottles of Martini sit on the drinks trolley alongside the Tio Pepe and Famous Grouse. Above is a cocktail mixer and six pre-frosted glasses. The grand piano is a handsome repository for yet more family photographs.

Into the morning room,



Peter de Savary, the yachtsman and entrepreneur, is selling the estate to move to Dartmoor and become "inaccessible"

HOUSE OF THE WEEK

Painted a beautiful, subtle shade of green. There is fine wood panelling, window seats and a walk-in safe. From here you ascend the sweeping staircase to the first floor. The master bedroom faces south and west with a balcony overlooking the manicured lawns.

Naturally, there is an en suite complete with pine and marble fireplace, plus a bath-jacuzzi big enough to sail the owner's Victory 83 in. Bedroom two has a wonderful Victorian overhead shower.

The next room you enter is full of ladies' haute couture and a shoe collection that would arouse the interest of Imelda Marros. This is Mistress Lana's dressing room.

The next room has even more pictures of de Savary sitting on various powerful motorbikes, plus pictures of cars, and neatly folded monogrammed towels. In the de Savary study a giant reclining leather chair sits imposingly behind the sort of desk that could only belong to one who runs an international business. Where the rest of us might have a teacup full of ballpoint pens at the end of the desk, there is a collection of Mont Blanc pens.



The stable courtyard and one-bedroom guest cottage also includes a double garage

Brian the gardener takes me for a spin round the grounds in the de Savary Land Rover.

In the barn is an ancient V8 Bentley Mulliner Turbo RT, a soft-topped Beetle, an Aston Martin and enough antique furniture to keep the *Antiques Road Show* in business for several more episodes.

There are five woods plus acres of yew, oak, beech and ash trees to look after. Brian is the only full-time gardener, so is he not a bit busy?

"You could say that. I haven't had time to go home in a month, nor time to take a holiday since the year before last.

Last Christmas Day I was so busy I barely had time for a bath."

Back at the house a bloke in a posh car came to view, but departed when he saw pylons in the background. "Couldn't be living with them," he said.

At Skibo Castle, his unimaginably luxurious hotel in Scotland, de Savary said it would not be a wrench to leave Bathealton, despite describing it in the brochure as "more than a house, it's a love affair".

"I've just bought an estate on Dartmoor which is very wild and remote. Just what I want. I want to get as far away from London as possible.

"Having said that, London is only an hour and 40 minutes from Taunton by train and the breakfast and dinner are excellent."

So how much is a first-class return on the train?

"I wouldn't know. And anyone who needed to find out would not be the sort of person to buy Bathealton," he replies.

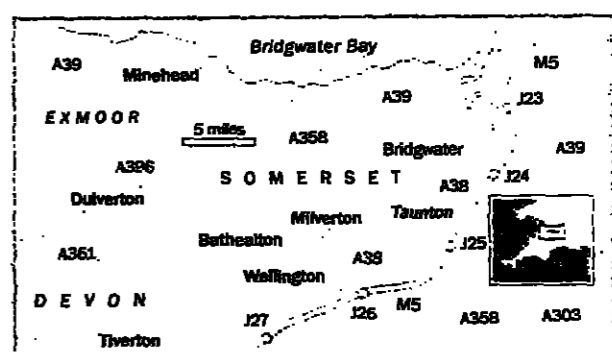
What about the chap and the pylons? De Savary is dismissive. "You don't really notice the pylons," he says.

Agents: Knight Frank International, 20 Hanover Square, London W1R 0AH (0171-629 8171).



The master bedroom has an open fireplace and terrace

MARKET COMMENT



FOR THOSE seeking easy access to a genuinely rural idyll, Bathealton is well placed. It nestles in the heart of the Somerset countryside, with a wealth of huntin', shootin' and fishin' opportunities only 12 miles away on the road on Exmoor, and is almost within a two-hour rail journey to London: Taunton, 12 miles away, is an hour and 40 minutes on the train from Paddington, while the M5 is only six miles from the door.

Not that one need be particularly aware of the Southeastern connection. As Richard Addington at Knight Frank in Exeter points out, this is real farming country — in comparison with, say, the Cotswolds, where weekend homes abound. "People have an image of the West Country," he says, "as real country with real villages and not too much outside influence, and to a large extent that's the way it is."

Buyers at the upper end of the market are mostly London-based and looking for a full-blown country existence rather than second homes, so good transport connections are highly significant. Popular villages around Taunton include Milverton and Dulverton; the latter, on the outskirts of Exmoor, is a prime target for those with a penchant for the field sports that abound in the vicinity.

However, this part of Somerset was quite a prosperous farming area, and as a consequence it is a hunting ground for quality farmhouses as well as deer and foxes. In centuries past there was also a thriving wool industry based around Wellington, which has resulted in a stock of handsome old wool-merchants' houses.

Country properties are markedly more affordable than their equivalents further east: a well-kept farmhouse in ten acres of land would generally cost between £300,000 and £400,000, according to Richard Addington, "and it would have to be an exceptional property to hit £500,000". Down the scale, a two or three-bedroom terraced cottage could be found for £100,000 to £125,000, though you could easily pay more. But, he says, the market is now pretty stable on the whole: it is only for the best properties at the top of the market that prices have exceeded expectations this year.

FAITH GLASGOW



The wine cellar is extensive and well-stocked



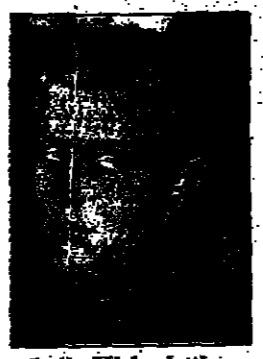
Left, the lake is set within the estate's parkland which has specimen trees, an island and fishing jetty and is surrounded by the rolling Somerset countryside. Right, the typically 18th-century English walled garden



Right, the typically 18th-century English walled garden

SMART MOVES

Model: INDIA HICKS and her boyfriend, David Flint Wood, are developing a small guest cottage near their house on Harbour Bay in the Bahamas. It will be available for occasional lets.



India Hicks: letting

The previous home of broadcaster **NICHOLAS PARSONS** is being sold. Chesterton is asking £99,950 for the freehold of Great Cottage in Sandy Road, NW3, on the edge of Hampstead Heath.

Accommodation includes five bedrooms, two bathrooms and two reception rooms.



Parsons: house sale

Breckenborough House, near Thirk, York, the yard of racehorse trainers **JACK and LYNDIA RAMSDEN**, is for sale. Agent Knight Frank is looking for offers over £1 million for the country house which has five bedrooms, four bathrooms, three reception rooms, a study and a conservatory.

There is extensive staff accommodation and a training yard with 52 loose boxes, equine pool, all-weather gallops and paddocks of about 100 acres.

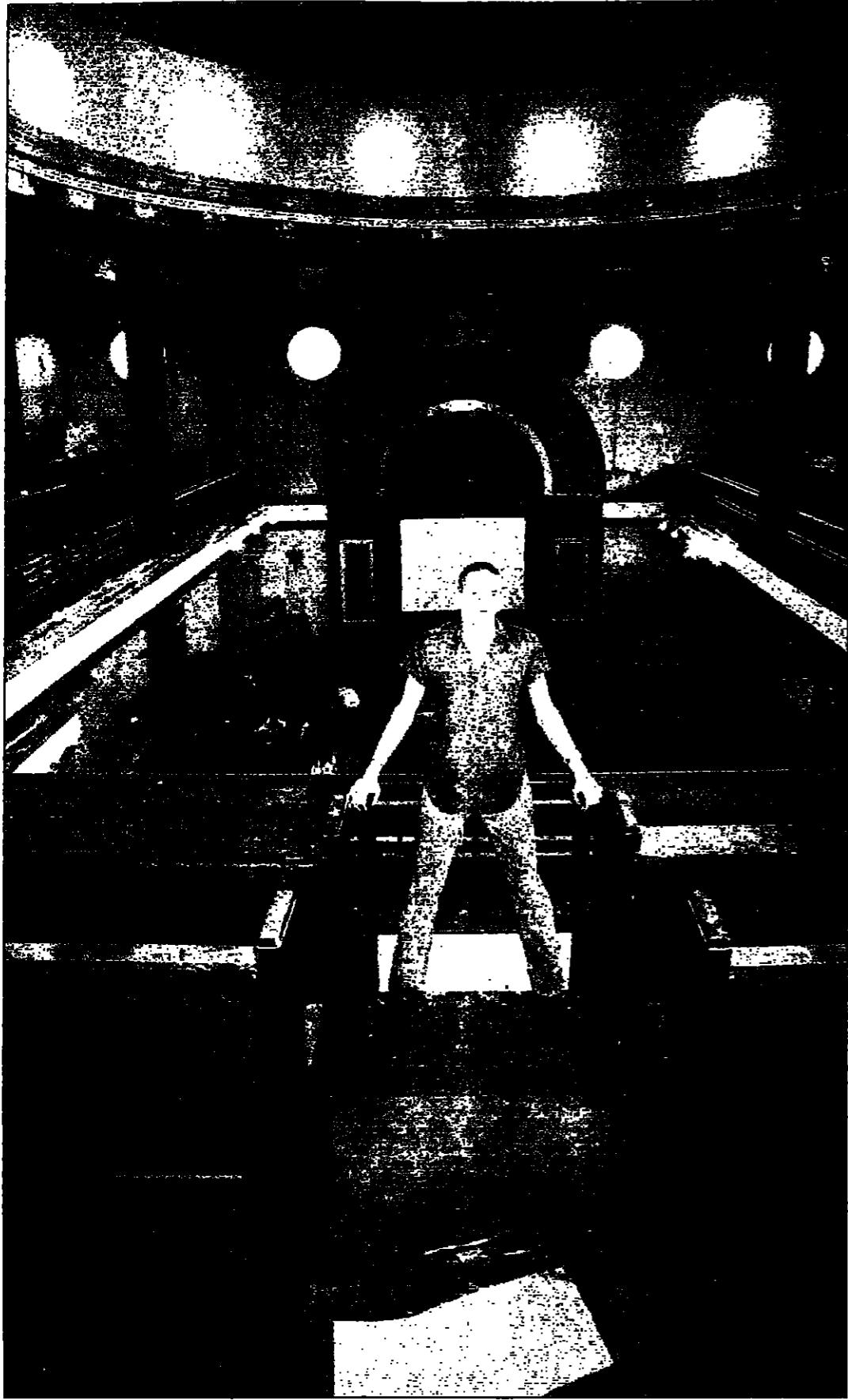
Price Range: £100 - £295,000

0171-629 8171

Advertisement for ANORPHIC MUSEUM VIEWS at CONSUMER MARK. Price Range £100 - £295,000. 0171-629 8171

هكذا من الإيجل

Squatters have rights to renovate, too



Chris Singer in the once abandoned synagogue where he moved in and set about making it habitable

When Chris Singer, a mixed media artist and committed squatter, moved in to a closed Orthodox synagogue in Montague Road, Dalston, East London, he first had to negotiate piles of rucked debris. The courtyard was strewn with cracked urns, bits of crumbling balustrades, rubbish and an abandoned Volvo. Always quick to spot an empty space, Chris, 26, changed the locks and claimed squatters' rights. That was the easy part. The interior was the product of five years of council neglect and teenage vandalism. Promisingly, long oak pews in the galleries, scalloped arches, slim columns with acanthus-leaf capitals and, upstairs, the huge sliding screens had all survived. Chris immediately saw potential in the space for art happenings to attract Hackney's hip arts crowd. He checked the planning history and set to work reviving the building. After the synagogue closed in 1980 it had become a community centre. This explained the lurid repainting in green and red. For Thomas Nugent, an architect who keeps tabs on local squats while running his own practice nearby, the synagogue has been unjustly forgotten. Built in 1933 in the simple modern Anglicised style of the period, it adds character to the surrounding plain Victorian terraced houses. "I think it has historic and architectural qualities that merit local, if not national, listing," he explains. Once he moved in, Chris set to work. "The floor was caked in filth. Cleaning that took days," he smiles, face glistening with perspiration. "I've patched up the entrance, cleared the courtyard and cut down the overgrown trees." By fixing the roof and sealing the windows he made it less vulnerable to structural decay. The Volvo went. Chris then switched on the water and electricity and introduced himself to the neighbours. Vandals, seeing the lights burning inside, moved on.

Far from being the destructive pests of folklore, squatters could help to save old buildings, says Adrian Gotton



Mr Singer's synagogue, one of London's 128,000 derelict buildings

Squatters have a reputation as anarchic wreckers which does not fit this kind of can-do conscientiousness. "Some of them can be a pain in the neck," admits Chris. "There are selfish high-profile cases." Tom Nugent points to the Wilton Way School as a nearby example. "It was vacant for a while and travellers and squatters occupied the site," he says. "This lot weren't very nice. They damaged the beautiful roof lights of this old Victorian school. When I went there it had already started to rot because there had been quite long-term water penetration. That was very sad." Yet, in contrast, responsible squatters such as Chris can help to preserve empty buildings that would otherwise fall into terminal decay. *The Squatters' Handbook* is their guide, providing detailed instructions on every DIY tip needed to keep a house well maintained. At the same time as making buildings habitable, squatters can also make residential communities feel safer. At Trumpion, a row of kooky-looking cottages in Brighton, residents in 1996 petitioned the council and landlord to allow squatters to stay, partly because their presence made an adjacent quiet alleyway safe. The buildings, hailed as good examples of early working-class housing, had also faced demolition, but because of the squatters' repairs they were saved and later converted. Empty properties bring problems into a neighbourhood and conservation groups such as English Heritage and housing charities agree that buildings are better occupied. If nothing is done about empty houses they can quickly become honeypots for crime and vandalism. They become dumping grounds and depreciate local house prices. For Britain's 11,000 empty listed buildings, architectural theft is also a problem. However, experience shows that by installing a caretaker, these problems decrease. "Buildings are most at risk when

they are unoccupied," says Beth McHattie of English Heritage. "Squatting can be very damaging, but in some cases squatters ensure that historic buildings are not vandalised or destroyed and might even lead to their rescue." Several agencies concede that responsible squatters effectively fulfil a caretaker function. "I think squatters can play a kind of caretaker role," accepts Tom Nugent. Beth McHattie agrees: "Certainly, if a building is empty and not in use, then it makes sense for people to live there temporarily." Although Chris is not an isolated case, the image of squatters as vandalising opportunists endures. Perhaps this is because many people who call themselves squatters share nothing of Chris Singer's attitude and are in fact no more than petty criminals. A spokesman for the Association of Residential Letting Agents (ARLA) argues that there are no squatters in the private rental sector, only trespassers. "If someone breaks in to your private property they are trespassers," he says. "Otherwise they could break in to your house daily and say they are squatters. To break and enter is illegal. They are breaking the law. They are not squatters, they are criminals." There is a definite moral and legal difference between someone who squats in derelict property and someone who breaks into private property.

Chris overcame the neighbours' suspicions through careful diplomacy. One neighbour, Robert, is impressed by his initiative and energy. "At least he's using it rather than leaving it empty. And he's productive and friendly." Neighbours on Montague Road also point to an agreeable decrease in car vandalism and nuisance teenagers since Chris moved in. The synagogue, once a vibrant community centre, was drawn into North London's vicious drug war. Naturally, residents are worried that gangs might use the site again. However, by living and working there, Chris makes that outcome less likely. Hackney Council has started eviction proceedings against Chris. The complex case may end in deadlock as residents object to another community centre while figures like Tom campaign against demolition. "I don't know where I'll go next," says Chris, who has not lived in a normal house since he was 17. "I've been looking at a few nice ones. I always keep my eyes open." With 128,000 other empty properties scattered across London alone, there is no shortage from which to choose.

Historically speaking, the term squatter referred to anyone who settled on land or occupied property without title, right or payment of rent. In the case of occupation of land or property, without legal authority, you may apply to the Land Registry for a "necessity title" (or "squatters title" as it is often referred to). To do this you must prove "adverse possession" for a period of 12 years. This means that you must openly occupy the land and any buildings on it, without hindrance or legal objection, for a period of at least 12 years. After a further period left to the Land Registry's discretion — but usually at least ten years — it is possible to apply for an "absolute title". In 1996 a couple sold a house that they had lived

in, rent-free for 19 years, for £103,000. The Department of the Environment estimates that, during the last year on record, 767,000 (3.7 per cent) of all properties were empty. Shelter, the national campaign for homeless people, estimates 128,845 of these are in London. The 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act gave bailiffs new legal powers to use force to enter premises occupied by squatters. Landlords and homeowners were also given the option of obtaining an interim order allowing evictions to take place within 24 hours. The Advisory Service for Squatters who publish *The Squatters' Handbook* (£1 plus 39p p&p) can be contacted on 0171-221 8080. **JOE WARWICK**

HOME SWAP

CHISLEHURST, a leafy southeast London suburb nudging Kent, is popular with commuters who can get to Charing Cross in 28 minutes on the Orpington line. It has some pretty Victorian terraced cottages priced from £100,000 for two bedrooms, and some fine mock-Tudor detached houses, from £350,000. Prices have stabilised, following gains of up to 40 per cent over the past two years, fuelled by a shortage of well-located homes. The area around Welshpool, just over the border in Wales, with its rolling hills and unspoilt countryside, is a popular haunt with second-home buyers. You can still pick up a stone-built three-bedroom terraced house from £50,000 or a detached period house from £85,000, despite price gains of 10 per cent this year. About £120,000 buys a three to four-bedroom farmhouse with an acre or two of paddocks. You can still buy a lot of house for your money in the Scottish Highlands, although prices are moving up. In the Cairngorm mountains, around the skirts of Aviemore, a two-bedroom terraced house can be had for £10,000. A stone-built three-bedroom detached house will fetch from £80,000; a farmhouse in up to five acres of land from £120,000.

- For £127,500 you can buy the Old Court House, an 18th-century two-bedroom terraced cottage with a courtyard garden, off the common in Old Hill, Chislehurst, Kent (GA Property Services, 0151-467 0114).
- In Wales, £140,000 will buy Tyn-Y-Celyn, a restored four-bedroom, three-reception-room, detached cottage, at Langwydrin, near Oswestry. It comes with two acres of gardens and paddocks and beautiful far-reaching views over farmland and valleys (GA Town & Country, 01691 854989).
- Spend even less (£130,000) in the Scottish Highlands, and you can afford Glengarry — a stone-built five-bedroom bed and breakfast establishment in landscaped gardens, in Kingussie, near Aviemore (GA Town & Country, 01463 221166).

First-timers' share of the spoils

Diana Wildman reports on a scheme to get young buyers on the home ladder

Young people with steady jobs who are financially unable to take that first step on to the housing ladder could find the solution to their problem in shared ownership. The scheme is designed for potential first-time buyers who cannot afford to buy outright. Part-funded by the Government and run by housing associations and local authorities throughout Britain, shared ownership enables first-time buyers to purchase a significant share — usually 50 per cent — of a property. Rent is paid to the housing association on the unbought slice until the owner can pay for a further portion of the property. The rent, which is heavily subsidised, is then reduced proportionally. There are some 104,000 housing association-funded homes in England. To qualify, potential purchasers must prove they are in steady employment, show they are unable to obtain a home of their own in the private sector and satisfy lending requirements. James Wood, a 24-year-old telephone engineer, and his partner, Linda Waldron, 25, moved into a two-bedroom, ground-floor flat at The Moorings in Chelmsford, Essex, last October. "I was living with my parents and couldn't afford the high rent in Chelmsford," says James. "I am wheelchair-bound so needed a ground-floor home and saw an advert for the flats. I applied to buy and moved in three months later. The full market value was £55,000 and I obtained a 100 per cent mortgage for £27,500 for a 50 per cent share and pay £175 in rent." Total payments, with the mortgage, come to about £350 per month. "We hope to start saving to buy a further chunk soon but the initial outlay was high, taking into account all our legal,



Despite an erratic income, actor Craig Barrett moved into the home he wanted thanks to a shared-ownership scheme

survey and moving costs." James adds. "There is no question that we would both still be with our parents without this method of purchase." All this paints a very rosy picture but there is a downside, too, as 33-year-old book-keeper Jane McKeachen and her welder husband, Ian, 32, discovered when they applied to purchase the remaining 25 per cent of their three-bedroom semi in Royal Quays, North Shields, two years ago. In 1994, the couple bought a 75 per cent share of the property, then valued at £40,000. They paid a deposit of £3,000, took out a mortgage for £27,000 and rented the remainder for £75 per month. Their total monthly repayments are about £265. The house is now worth about £55,000. "We had been living in a one-bedroom flat in North Shields and I was pregnant when we saw the houses advertised," says Jane. The couple were thrilled to meet the shared-ownership criteria and moved in. "The house is lovely, has a large garden, a garage and a park close by. We could never have afforded to buy outright," Jane adds. "In 1996 we were able to increase our mortgage to buy the remaining 25 per cent share and assumed it would be a question of simply increasing the loan. But we had to pay for a new building society valuation, take out a new mortgage and pay all the legal costs. "Not only that, but when we had it revalued, the value had risen by £2,500 and we had to pay our share of that increase. "I love the house but really feel that the financial implications involved in the stepping-up process should be made clearer." Should an owner decide to sell, he needs to offer the property back to the housing association. Most have waiting lists, so it is a simple procedure and the usual commission is 75 per cent. The housing association takes any remaining share it might still own, with the rest going to the vendor. Should the home fail to sell within a reasonable time, usually three months, the owner can put it on the open market. What is not always made clear is that additional shares are sold at the market value at the time. So in a rising market some owners may be in for a nasty shock, although they have made a profit on the share already owned. Whatever the case, there is no doubt that shared ownership can be a good way to obtain a new home in a popu-

Diary of a househunter

MONDAY
Two weeks have passed and we are still no nearer to buying the flat in Earlsfield, SW18. No one can find the documents to prove the place no longer has subsidence.

TUESDAY
The agent selling the flat is getting twitchy. This is the third time the flat has gone under offer and the first that a surveyor has balked at the "historical" subsidence.

WEDNESDAY
I notice subsidence has a bad smell. People turn their noses up when you mention it. My mother tells a cheery story of a friend who bought a house with subsidence, and was found dead in her goldfish pond.

THURSDAY
Visit girlfriend house-hunting in Lewes, East Sussex. The chocolate-box town with good schools is 15 minutes from Brighton and has no flats, just tiny cottages.

FRIDAY
Together we view a two-bedroom house in Lewes

for £95,000. The garden is too small to swing a cat and a loft-converted bedroom is too short for a five-year-old. I am surprised to find London prices for even less space.

Next week: the flat with subsidence falls through.

EMMA MAFFONY

Luxury in...
All of this...
One City of...
One Brit...

PROPERTY

TO ADVERTISE CALL: 0171-81 1989 (TRADE) 0171-81 4000 (PRIVATE) FAX:0171 782 7828 0171 782 7799

NEW HOMES

Limehouse £112,995. Commercial Wharf, off Commercial Road Limehouse, London E14. 1, 2 & 3 bed luxury apartments from £112,995. 4 bed 3 bath freehold townhouses now from £246,995. Showhome open Times - Sun 10am to 6pm. Monday 2pm to 6pm. Tel: 0171 531 9916 (24hrs)

COMING TO THE NEW HOMES. A unique development of over 30 1/2 bed town houses. 1 minute walk to South London independent and beautiful coast. Amazingly good equipped with private parking. Price £125,000 to £225,000. Come and see our fabulous showhouse. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 11-3pm on call: 0171 424 0763

this on your doorstep. Globe View. Riverside apartments near Globe View, London EC4. 1 & 2 bedroom apartments from £165,000 - £495,000. Marketing Suite open every day 10am-6pm. Tel: 0171 489-8013 (24hrs)

Westbury teignmouth. In South Devon, Cypress Heights is our luxurious development in Teignmouth. Consisting of just 9 detached properties all with a sumptuous specification and generous sized plots. For information call (01626) 777443. 5 bedroom detached homes from £210,000. Some already reserved.

IMAGINE A MAGNIFICENT PARKSIDE APARTMENT FOR ONLY £245,000. Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith, London W6. Easy access to A4/M4. Minutes walk from Stamford Brook and Ravenscourt Park tube stations (District Line). Prestigious Parkside location located within Conservation area. Independent gas fired central heating and services. Passenger lifts and secure private parking space. Maple wood flooring and quality appliances throughout.

PORTUGAL. ALGARVE Vale do Lobo, Quinta do Lago & surrounding area. FLORIDA HOMES. FLORIDA HOMES Orlando and Golf Course. TIMESHARE UK. THE CRAIGENDARROCH OWNERS CLUB. SOUTH DEVON COSY TERRACE COTTAGE. MID NORFOLK. NORTH OXFORDSHIRE. NORTH LINKS. BLANDFORD FORUM. GREECE. SPAIN. COSTA DEL SOL. WALES. WEST WALES.

One City of London. One Britton Street. Britton Street, London EC1 - Located opposite Clerkenwell Green. The freedom to roam Zone One is yours within a short stroll of One Britton Street. 100% Newly built 1, 2 & 3 Bed Apartments. Fully fitted Kitchens incl. all appliances. Fully independent Gas central heating. Video entry and security alarm system. Maple Beech wood, ceramic and carpet flooring throughout. Secure underground parking available for selected units. 10 Year NHBC. Show Flat Open Daily from 10am-6pm. Tel: 0171 250 0675

WILTSHIRE NR MALMESBURY. 1/1/23 Bedroom Flats Available from £170,000 & £290,000. Tel: 01923 353188

WALES. COUNTY Downham Co Services for Buyers, Sellers & Investors. HOME SEARCH. BALEARICS. CARIBBEAN. FRANCE. RETIREMENT HOMES.

FRANCE. ALPINE Chalet 250m x 30m. ALPS deluxe development of alpine houses. BORDEN 11/12 Bed House. RELUCTANT SALE. THE DURRILL HOUSE PROVENCE. GREECE. SPAIN. COSTA DEL SOL. WALES. WEST WALES.

LONDON PROPERTY. Canal Building. Canal-side loft apartments London N1. Saes desk 0171 684 5996. SUSSEX. WILTSHIRE. RETIREMENT HOMES. English Courtyard have a limited number of luxury retirement houses & flats available at: Stansted-in-the-Vale, Oxon - 11meters, Somerset. Lymington, Kent - Lane End Nr Marlow, Bucks. Prices from £92,500 to £228,500. Freephone 0800 220858 quoting ref RA1

Retire in comfort and style. Spacious retirement houses and flats, set in beautifully landscaped gardens in 19 counties around England. From £159,000 to £295,000 in *Cambridgeshire, *Cheshire, *Essex, Surrey, *Wiltshire, West Sussex. *Star House Open. Soon in Hampshire & Wiltshire. Freephone 0800 220 858 quoting ref NAK. www.englishcourtyard.co.uk. English Courtyard

سكذامن لإمهل

Is a loft conversion worth the expense, delays, mess and smell — not to mention scaffolders from hell? Er, yes, says Andrew Yates



Before: Two weeks after the scaffolding goes up, the loft conversion gets underway at the house, left. The builders Dave and Barry, above, who exuded professionalism and consumed industrial quantities of teabags, hard at work on the loft

Thank God it's all over

Scaffolders are a breed apart if the individuals who entered our home one spring morning, with stomachs that appeared to contain the entire pub from the night before, are indicative of their kind. A brusque rap on the door announced their arrival followed by successive demands from each of the team to use the 'toilet'. By the time of their departure, we had received



After: One year later Rose Yates peers out from the newly created rooftop terrace



The loft conversion has provided the couple with the largest room in the house

complaints from each of our neighbours and a number of plants in our backyard had been destroyed. Still, the scaffolding was up. Despite the plank dropped from roof level into one neighbour's garden, despite the decision to place a support pole on top of a plant in the flowerbed next door; and despite the fact that the satellite television reception in the house on the other side no longer worked. The builders were at last about to convert our loft. We had been waiting for them for months. It all began the previous spring when we decided to convert rather than move house and, after recom-

mendations from friends and a leaf through Yellow Pages, we came up with a shortlist of three which we whittled down to one. The company was local, the salesman appeared polite and normal, and his price

fell between those of the other two companies: £27,000, give or take a couple of hundred pounds. After we had agreed to go with Top Flight in west London, the "nice" salesman quickly began to pressurise us to sign a contract, warning that prices were about to go up. So we signed and paid a deposit of £2,700 in July last year — eight months before we greeted the scaffolders.

The council says Top Flight submitted the planning application in October. It was passed by the end of the year and in late January we paid our second tranche of the deposit as agreed in the contract: £5,200 on the "pass of plans". Top Flight had said that work would begin "approximately one month" after receipt of this payment and the Party Wall Notice — a consent form from our neighbours.

So, by the end of January, we had dispatched cheques to the value of £7,900. February came and went, with no sign of activity or builders. After a few exasperated phone calls, stressing that I was a journalist from *The Times* and was planning to write an article on the subject, we were promised a start date of March 17. But St Patrick's Day passed with nothing other than an excuse from Top Flight that, with 30 teams working, they were overstretched.

Only after the scaffolding had been erected for more than a fortnight did the builders arrive in the third week of April (delayed because of floods, explained Top Flight). And when they did arrive, they could not have been more civil, efficient, professional and less like scaffolders. Dave and Barry were from Coventry, subcontracted to Top Flight. They stayed in a caravan during the week and returned home at weekends. They would be on the pavement waiting for us to rise when we opened the curtains in the morning. They would be drilling at 8pm in the attic when our 15-month-old son was trying to sleep. They went through yards of lavatory paper and industrial quantities of teabags. Tea splashes remain today on the staircase which we have yet to repaint.

The materials arrived, coordinated by Top Flight. The skip on our doorstep filled immediately with other people's rubbish so rank that clouds of flies overhung our front door. The vacuum cleaner, a bagless Dyson with its claim never to lose suction, blocked day after day with the detritus falling from upstairs. The cleaner de-

spaired. The air was, it times, black with foetid Edwardian dust. My wife complained that it was like breathing treacle and the neighbour complained. Days of eruption stretched into weeks. Then one day at the beginning of July, there was a burly knock on the door. Scaffolders had come to dismantle their structure with the same grace as the first bunch. Dave and Barry took leave soon after and we had a large room, larger than any other in the house, at 390 sq ft, for about £30,000 after adding in costs for the floor and painting. And looking from our new vantage to the trampled garden below, we agreed that the delays, dirt and even the scaffolders had been worth the bother.

EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER THE TIMES

Save 20% on cream tea and strawberries

AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY

Readers who would like to see *Venice Through Canaletto's Eyes*, the current exhibition at the National Gallery, can save 20 per cent on a delicious strawberry cream tea at the Brasserie on the mezzanine above the Gallery shop, in the Sainsbury Wing. The brasserie has spectacular views of Trafalgar Square. You can take advantage of this offer on any weekday between 3pm-5pm until August 31, 1998. Simply present the voucher, right, to claim your discount.

PLUS SAVE 20% AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY SHOP

You can also save 20 per cent on purchases from the National Gallery shop where you can buy exclusive items inspired by exhibits. For details and a discount voucher, see *The Times Magazine*.

THE TIMES NATIONAL GALLERY

20% off CREAM TEA AND STRAWBERRIES

This voucher entitles the bearer to a discount of 20 per cent when they enjoy a strawberry cream tea at the National Gallery Brasserie any weekday afternoon between 3pm and 5pm. Valid until August 31, 1998.

Title _____ Initials _____ Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Digitally signed by Restaurants

If you would prefer not to receive information and offers from organisations carefully selected by The Times, please tick

CHANGING TIMES

Do your homework first

If you have outgrown your house, expanding into the loft is a good way to gain that much-needed extra space. A room in the roof, with pitched ceilings and dormer or Velux windows, is a popular choice. Lofts can be converted into an extra bedroom, office or playroom, even a bathroom. But there are technical points to be considered. The roof: A loft conversion in a modern house with roof trusses very close together is virtually impossible, there is just not enough space. Traditional roofs may have structural supports and beams which have to be worked round, or replaced by steel joists. Headroom: The entry to the loft should offer maximum headroom. You need a sensible ceiling height. About 2.3m is the minimum height. Points to remember: Building regulations insist on proper fire precautions. Any building above three storeys needs a protected staircase (with a door) or a secondary fire escape, which may need planning consent. There must be an escape window in the converted loft of a two-storey house. You may have to seek the advice of a structural engineer if the joists need strengthening to take extra weight. Access: In England and Wales, a fixed loft ladder is acceptable on a two-storey house. A staircase may be more practical for a room likely to be used a lot, but it may take up valuable space. A spiral staircase or alternating stairs are an option if space is limited.

Employ professionals and you should recoup 80 per cent on loft conversions, says Cheryl Taylor



Loft conversions are affordable but may need permission

The windows: Flush Velux windows are easy and cheap to install, but dormer windows help if headroom is limited. These will involve structural roof modifications. You can't add a dormer window to a house facing a highway; special rules also apply to listed buildings and houses in conservation areas. Approval: Building regulations approval is required. Strong floors and insulation are important. If the conver-

sion raises the height of the house or changes its style, you will also need planning approval. Consider employing a structural engineer or an architect to give you advice and to oversee the work. Design: Trendy loft conversions are left with a half-finished, low-budget look, with beams and brickwork exposed and pipes painted bright colours. Putting a bath in the corner of your loft bedroom provides another

bathroom. There is still plenty of storage space under the eaves, even after conversion. Slide-out drawer boxes in eaves are an inexpensive option. Cost: Your loft can be converted for as little as £4,000 or as much as £50,000. Prices vary widely. Get estimates from builders and specialist loft conversion companies. My local builder quoted £4,000 for a one-room loft conversion on my three-bedroom, 1930s house, requiring minimal alterations to the roof structure. The price included two velux roof windows, access by fixed ladder through an existing hatch, plastered walls, a new floor, lighting and electric sockets. With a traditional staircase and central heating, the cost rises to £11,000 or up to £20,000 for two dormer windows. Value: Loft conversions are high on the value-for-money list but must be well-designed, on sound foundations and in keeping with the appearance of the house. You may recoup up to 80 per cent of the cost when you come to sell your home — provided you don't go in for anything too exotic. Homework: A useful book for DIY enthusiasts who are contemplating covering their own loft, building an extension or making other alterations and additions is *Home Builder*, by Oliver Evans Palmer and David Alan Rundle (published by The Stationery Office, price £40). It provides a practical guide through the complex web of legislation with sections on planning and building controls.

Weatherhood for some

ANY, UMBR...
DINIA FROM

APARTMENT HO...

A brotherhood — for some

Ruth Gledhill is forgiven her sins and welcomed, as Judas, to the fold

THERE ARE 750 bishops at the Lambeth Conference. Apart from their wives and husbands, the journalists among the few lay people present. Whether it is because we are lay or press is difficult to say, but we have become the pariahs of the conference: the tax-deductible up a tree, with nobody by the name of Jesus to ask us to dinner. We have been issued with fluorescent pink badges, and bishops, briefed by spin doctors, say that "pink means danger". Our badges, which must be worn at all times, have become the visual equivalent of the leper's handbell. This adorned, with shock-imprint scarf, skirt and nail varnish added to match for good measure, I turned up at a early morning conference eucharist to find the Archbishop of Tanzania preying on sin, repentance and forgiveness.

At the Anglican church service before the world at this conference, the ten-year meeting of all its bishops and archbishops from around the world, the message must go out to the world: Anglicans still believe Jesus, he said. "God is God, not because we say He is; but because He is," he said. And because He is, He is not just for ever and ever. The church must strive to be a prophetic ministry, and its leaders must be equipped to proclaim the Gospel in the nation they come from, he added. The Archbishop, speaking with a passion and eloquence rarely heard in the Western Anglican church, was leading a eucharist celebrated in Swahili. *Wapendwa katika Bwana*, he said, opening the confession. "Dear Friend in the Lord," After



Latin American dancers mark the conference opening

AT YOUR SERVICE

★ **A five-star guide** ★
CELEBRANT: Most Rev Donald Mitemela
ARCHITECTURE: Windowless sports hall in windwept wasteland.
SERMON: Superb call to Christian witness.
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
MUSIC: Hymns and gospel songs. ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
LITURGY: Musical and profound. ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
SPIRITUAL HIGH: Refreshing. ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
AFTER-SERVICE CARE: Unwelcoming and excluding, to the press at least. Simply awful.

Marriage, sex and the single Christian

Young singles are deserting the Church. Katherine Miller discovers why

For a devout Christian in search of a mate, church would seem a logical place to begin looking. But two years ago Ian Gregory realised that more people at his church were attending a divorce recovery course than marriage preparation classes. Those wounded by marital break-ups were coming to church for help, but singles in the overwhelmingly young congregation just weren't getting it together. Mr Gregory decided to write a book, not on the parous state of marriage, but on why Christians around the country are locked into involuntary singleness — and why it is costing the Church hard-won members. Statistics don't exist on why people start going to church, much less on why they leave, but Mr Gregory claims anecdotal evidence shows that loneliness is driving devout Christians into the arms of non-believing partners. What frustrates him is that the Church, which offers no alternative to marriage, isn't doing enough to help singles get hitched. Consequently, Mr Gregory, a 35-year-old television producer, reluctant Chelsea bachelor and "would-be practicing heterosexual", is author of a best-seller he wishes was not necessary: *No Sex Please, We're Single*. It has been snapped up by churchgoers



The Church must find ways of introducing devout young Christians to suitable partners, says author Ian Gregory

Spiritual lessons can be drawn from seemingly unlikely circumstances. The other day I took part in a press launch of a report on the future of computers and their effects on our lives. The author had produced an interesting account of social trends and information technology into the next century. On the basis of these he predicted the development of what he calls a digital familiar. The idea, though not the electronics, is simple enough and imaginatively appealing. Our increasing dependency on computers will create the need for an electronic assistant or guide appearing on screen. Extensions of present technology, plus anticipated advances, should make it possible to create not just a talking face but a person in the machine, a virtual companion or familiar. The report was launched to a pool of journalists from various computing and business magazines. The main presentations — apart from my own — used hi-tech, computer-projected diagrams and summaries. What was a philosopher doing in the midst

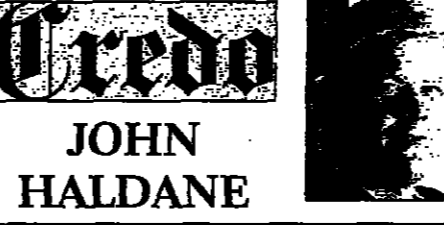
baptisms. Mothering Sunday and weddings loom large on the Church calendar. Christian singles feel left out. Their faith is undermined by depression and sexual frustration, and they feel patronised by married couples. His research introduced him to dozens of bachelors who are indignant that seminars on relationships are invariably led by husband-and-wife teams who seem to lecture about the pleasures of marital sex but ignore the loneliness of their audience. Nor are the clergy, who typically marry young, sympathetic. They preach publicly about the anguish caused by broken marriages, but limit discussions on bachelorhood to the pitfalls of temptation. Wistful spinsters get coffee and a warning from the cleric's wife on the perils of turning marriage into a "false idol". Single girls feel guilty and abandoned. As well as urging singles to

take the initiative, he wants church leaders to do their bit. He says Jews, Muslims and Hindus "go out of their way" to find culturally acceptable means of introducing the offspring to partners so that community and faith survive. Mr Gregory's church, Holy Trinity Brompton in Knightsbridge, London (also known as HTB or Hunt The Bride), is filled every Sunday with well-heeled, educated and often beautiful people. "If they are finding it difficult to get married, what's it like in small churches in the sticks?" he asks. To help his campaign, he has persuaded Christian holiday company MasterSun to set aside two weeks in September for singles at hotels in Greece and Turkey. Unusually for a Christian

pour huge amounts of time and energy into trying to find someone, time which would be far better spent serving God. *No Sex Please, We're Single* is published by Kingsway, £4.99. MasterSun Christian holidays, 0181-942 9442. *Impliedly a man may not have sex before death is no laughing matter*

Idolising IT — the virtual person in the machine

of this? The report seemed to suggest that within a decade or so we could have created electronic persons active within computers and this was thought to raise a number of philosophical and ethical questions, such as whether the digital familiar would have a soul, whether it would have rights, and whether switching it off would be murder. Three aspects of the occasion were instructive from a spiritual point of view. First, although the report and its presentation suggested a technocratic future, the setting of the gathering was rooms and a garden designed in a combination of Japanese and Italian minimalist chic, and resembled monastic cells leading to a courtyard. Although the venue had not been chosen for the purpose, the juxtaposition of computer and cloister was striking and a reminder that the more we are drawn into a new world future the more our souls seek the simplicity of an old world past. A second point arises from the emphasis on development and change. In thinking about the course of human history there is a tendency to make three assumptions, each of which is contestable. First, to identify change with progress. Second, to assume that social change is irreversible. Third, to believe that the times in which one lives are of particular historical significance. Apart from the fact that these are all probably false, taken together they have the effect of undermining the sense of human freedom and responsibility. The flow of events is something we can and should take charge of. How we act is a matter of choice, and choice is informed by values. History cannot drive us down a pathway we have not chosen. The third point concerns the nature of human beings and shows why computer familiars would not be persons, but only soulless software. Man is a special kind of animal. Certainly we are more than matter, but we are nevertheless material beings. Experience is not a disembodied process that could be relocated in a computer; it is tied in with our animal nature, with our appetites, needs, strengths and vulnerabilities. Christianity teaches that God became man. To do so he had to become incarnate — to be made flesh. Idolatry involves treating lifeless objects as if they were inhabited by spirits. It would be ironic if computer technology were to revive that most ancient of errors only for religion to reject it as superstition. *John Haldane is professor of philosophy at the University of St Andrews.*



JOHN HALDANE

EXCLUSIVE OFFER THE TIMES

TJSCANY, UMBRIA OR SARDINIA FROM £259

FLY-DRIVE APARTMENT HOLIDAYS

Today *The Times*, in association with Impulse Holidays, offers ready savings on seven-night fly-drive apartment holidays from only £259 per person. With a hire car at your disposal, you can explore Italy's beautiful scenery. Choose from three destinations: Tuscany, with its rolling hills and lush vineyards; Umbria, in central Italy, with wonderful walled towns and ancient monasteries; Sardinia, with its many fine sandy beaches and clear seas. Each destination has a choice of studio, one, two or three-bedroom self-catering apartments.

DEPARTURES UNTIL SEPTEMBER 26, 1998

PRICE INCLUDES:

- Room nights from Gatwick or Edinburgh*
- Seven nights' self-catering accommodation
- Car hire ● UK airport taxes
- Edinburgh flights available for Tuscany and Umbria only, supplement £25 per person

PRICES PER PERSON

Tuscany, Sardinia, Sept 23 & 24	£259
Tuscany, Sardinia, Oct 10, 17 and 21	£299
Tuscany or Umbria, Sardinia, Aug 8, 15 and 22	£399

OR BOOKINGS CALL IMPULSE HOLIDAYS ON 0151-741 9007 QUOTE IT FOR BROCHURE DETAILS CALL 0999 153 541

This offer is operated by Air Travel Group Holidays, a company independent of Times Newspapers Limited. ABTA 051-45 ATOL 2398

CHANGING TIMES

Church services tomorrow

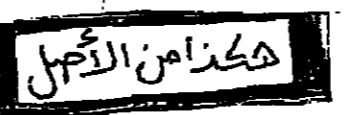
Eight Sunday after Trinity

BANGOR CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.45 Borealis, Borealis, Borealis, Borealis. BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL: 9 MP: 11 Ch Euch. Bogorodine Devo (Rachmaninoff); 4 Ch E. Stanford in B flat; 5.30 Asian Christmas. BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.15 M: 10.30 Euch. A: Almighty and everlasting God (Gibbons), Canon Hindle; 4 Ch E. A: Jehova quam multi sunt (Purcell). BRECON CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 11 Euch. Missa brevis (Britten); 3.30 E. Wood in G. CANTEBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.30 M: 11 S Euch. Canterbury mass (Purcell). CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL: 11 Euch. Memorial Association Remembrance service; 3.15 E. William in B flat; Rev D Comens; 6.30 Compline. CARLISLE CATHEDRAL: 7.45 M: 3 HC: 10.30 S Euch. Mozart in F; O sing joyfully (Britten); Canon S Pyc; 3 E. Morrill in E. Responses (Rice). CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP: 8 HC: 9.30 Euch. Rev K Hacker; 11.15 S Euch. Ireland in C. Tantum ergo (Nicholson); 6 Ch E. Stanford in B flat; A: Mighty glorious (Bach); Rev J Moody. HERIOT-WATSON CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L: 8 HC: 10 Euch. Mass for three voices (Byrd); Canon O Conway; 11.30 M. Read in B flat; Responses (Millington); 3.30 E. Salve regina (Cavalli); 6.30 E. Canon N Bass. CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10 M. Noble in B minor; 11 S Euch. O sacrum convivium (Tallis); Rt Rev M Maddocks; 3.30 E. CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, Dublin: 11 S Euch. Mozart in C; 3.30 Ch E. Stanford in B flat. CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, Oxford: 8 HC: 10 M. Archdeacon of Oxford; 11.15 S Euch. Missa brevis (Palestrina); Canon Pearce; 6 E. Howells in G. COVENTRY CATHEDRAL: 7.40 MP: 8 HC: 10.30 Euch. Missa solenne Christi muneris (Palestrina); Canon C Lamb; 5 Ch E. Short evening service (Morley). DURHAM CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10 M. Vaughan Williams in G; Canon M Kitchen; 11.15 HC. Missa brevis (Britten); 3.30 E. St Paul's service (Howells). ELY CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC: 10.30 S Euch. Missa brevis (Britten); Most Rev J Ramsdell; 3.45 E. Ashfield in D minor. EXETER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.45 S Euch. Missa dona nobis pacem (Langlais); Canon K Parry; 11.15 M. Collegium regale (Howells); 3 E. A: Blessed city heavenly Salem (Bainton); 6.30 ES. GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10.15 Euch. Missa brevis (Kodaly); Canon N Heavisides; 12.15 HC: 3 E. Gloucester service (Howells). HULLFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.45 S Euch. Darke in F; Canon M Parrant; 11.30 M. Stanford in B flat; Ave Maria (Bruckner); 6.30 E. Howells in E. LEVERDOR CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10 Euch. Collegium regale (Howells); 11.30 M. O praise the Lord (Holst); 3.30 E. LEICESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10 M: 10.30 Euch. A: The King shall rejoice (Handel); Canon A Lucas; 4.45 E. LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10.30 S Euch. Britten in E flat; Ave verum corpus (Eggar); Prebendary J Kidyard; 3.30 E. Howells in G. The spirit of the Lord (Eggar). LINCOLN CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L: 8 HC: 9.30 Euch. Rhetberger in E flat; Archdeacon of Lincoln; 11.15 M. Short service (Gibbons); Responses (Smith); 12.30 HC: 2.45 E. S. Responses (Lightfoot); 10.30 S Euch. LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10.30 Euch. Canon M Wolfe; 3 Ch E. Canon D Hunter; 4 HC. LLANDAFF CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9 C: 11 S Euch. 12.15 HC: 3.30 E. Blair in B minor; 6.30 E. Rev M R E Tomlinson. MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8.45 M: 9 Euch. 10.30 S Euch. Missa tu es Petrus (Palestrina); O sacrum convivium (Morales); 6.30 EP. NORWICH CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP: 8 HC: 10.30 S Euch. Ave verum corpus (Mozart); Canon J Haselock; 3.30 E. Dyon in F; Rt Rev E Leide; 6.30 EP. PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10 S Euch. Canon A Lucas; 4.45 E. (Ruckstetter). Canon K Kirk; 6 E. Stanford in C; Making a joyful noise (Mathias); Canon J Hodges. RIPON CATHEDRAL: 8.30 Euch. Mozart in F; Rev D Murray; 11.30 M. Ireland in F; A: Jesu grant me this I pray (Whitlock); 12.30 Euch. 5.30 E. Brewer in D. ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.45 M. Responses (Lightfoot); 10.30 S Euch. Messe solenne (Langlais); Rt Rev J Sychiema; 3.15 E. Dyon in D. SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10 Euch. A: Strengh for service Lord (Lane); Rt Rev G Wood; 11.30 M. Britten in C; 3 Ch E. SHEFFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10 MP: 10.30 S Euch. Lucas in B; Ave verum corpus (Mozart); Canon J Sinder; 6.30 E. KELLY in C. Responses (Perrill). SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL: 9 Euch: 11 Ch Euch. Missa O quam gloriosum (Victoria); A: If ye love me (Varin); 3 Ch E. Moeran in F; A: Hear my prayer O Lord (Bantock); 12.30 Euch. 5.30 E. Brewer in D. SOUTHWELL CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.45 M: 10.30 S Euch. Ave verum corpus (Mozart); Canon J Sinder; 6.30 E. KELLY in C. Responses (Perrill). SOUTHWELL MINSTER: 7.45 L: 8 HC: 9.30 C: 11 M. Boyce in A; 3.15 E. A: Thou O God art praised in Zion (Boyle). WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.15 C: 11 M. Boyce in A; 3.15 E. A: Thou O God art praised in Zion (Boyle). TRURO CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9 M: 10 S Euch. Sunston in F; 6 E. Dyon in F; A: Thou O God art praised in Zion (Boyle); Canon M Bostell. WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 9.15 C: 11 M. Boyce in A; 3.15 E. A: Thou O God art praised in Zion (Boyle); Canon M Bostell. WESTMINSTER ABBEY: 8 HC: 10 M. Collegium regale (Darzi); Sacerdotes domini (Byrd); Canon D Hutt; 3 E. Howells in G; 5.30 Organ recital; Marc Murray; 6.30 ES. Canon A Harvey.

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL: 7. & 9 Mass; 10.30 Sol Mass; 3.30 Sol V & B; 5.30. 7. WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10 M. A: O for a closer walk with God (Stanford); 11.15 S Euch. Sunston in A. YORK MINSTER: 7.30 M: 8.45 HC: 10 S Euch. Rheinberger in E flat; Rev S Chivanga; 11.20 S Euch. Stanford in B flat; LISAA command reunion service; 4 E. Gray in F minor; Canon Dr J Tye. ST ALBAN'S CATHEDRAL, Hertfordshire: 8 HC: 9.30 Euch; 11 M. Humfrey in E minor; 12.15 HC: 6.30 E. ST ASAPH CATHEDRAL, Denbighshire: 8 HC: 11 Ch Euch. Mine eyes for beauty pine (Howells); Very Rev K Goulstone; 3.30 EP. ST DAVID'S CATHEDRAL, Pembrokeshire: 8 HC: 9.30 Cymra Benigodd; 11.15 Ch M. O praise the Lord (Bantock); 6 Ch E. Blow Rev D P Bush. ST EDMUNDSBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 10 S Euch. Darke in F; Canon M Mincham; 11.30 Ch M. Harwood in A flat; 3.30 Ch E. Bairdson in D. ST FIN BARRIS CATHEDRAL: 8 HC: 11.15 Ch Euch. God so loved the world (Stanford); Rev E Hunter; 7 Ch E. Second service (Sheppard); If ye love me (Tallis). ST GILES CATHEDRAL, Birmingham: 8 HC: 10.45 M. Mozart in D; Rev Dr W D Cunnock; 11.30 MS: 6 S; Giles at St; Organ recital: Guy Whitley; 8 ES. Rev I K Stiven. ST MAGHAR'S CATHEDRAL, Old Aberdeen: 11 Rev R Fraser; 8 HC. ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL, Edinburgh: 8 Euch: 10.30 S Euch. Stanford in B flat; Rev J Cuthbert; 3.30 Ch E. Ashton in G. ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, Dublin: 8.30 Euch: 11.15 S Euch. Four part mass (Byrd); Venerable R M Stratford; 3.15 Ch E. Hewson in B. ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, EC4: 8 HC: 10 M. Responses (Smith); 11.20 S Euch. laudate dominum (Palestrina); Rt Rev H Parsley; 3.15 E. A: O clap your hands (Gibbons); 5 Organ recital: George Bayley; 6 ES. Rev J Halliham. ST PETER'S ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, SW7: 10.30 Divine Liturgy. Kievan and traditional polyphony. Met Anthony. ALL SAINTS, W8: 8 LM: 10.20 MP: 11 HM: 5.15 M: 6 E & B. The fourth service (Bantock). ALL SOULS, W1: 9.20, 11.30 MP; Rev Dr J Stott; 6.30 EP; Rev J Cook. THE ASSUMPTION, W1: 11 Missa brevis (Cassini); Magnificat prima toni (Lassus). CHELSEA OLD CHURCH, SW3: 8 HC: 11 C. Rev Dr P Eyles; 12.15 HC: 6 E. ST CROWEY CATHEDRAL OF SCOTLAND, WC2: 11.15 Rev Dr O B Sparks; 12.30 HC: 6.30. FARM STREET, W1: 8. 9.20 LM: 11 HM: 12.30 LM: 4.15 Mass: 6.15 LM. ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH, W8: 11 Holy Mass, Archbishop Y Gzizian; BROMPTON ORATORY, SW7: 7. 8. 9, 10, 11 Mass; Missa pater peccavi (Gabriel); 12.30 Mass; 3.30 V & B; 4.30, 7 Mass.

ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA, SW3: 11 M. Jesu the very thought of thee (Bainton); Responses (Ayleward); Canon F Goode; WISLEY'S CHAPEL, EC2: 11 Family C. Rev Dr L Griffiths. WESTMINSTER CENTRAL HALL (Bethesda): 11 MS. Rev Dr P Graves; 6.30 HC: 11 S Euch. Rev M Robins; 5.45 EP. ST BARTHOLOMEW/THE GREAT, EC1: 9.15 HC: 11 M. Boyce in C; A: Thy word is a lantern (Purcell); Mr H Potts; 6.30 E. Short service (Causant); A: Salve rex noster (Pratochius). ST BRIDE'S, EC4: 11 Ch Euch. Missa brevis (Mozart); O salutaris (Tallis); Canon J Oates; 6.30 Ch E. Stanford in G. Bring us O Lord, God, almighty. ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, SW1: 11 Very Rev J H McIndoe; 6.30, Rev D P Bush. ST ETHELDREDA'S, EC1: 11 S Mass. 8 HC: 9.45 Euch; 11.30 Visitation service; Rev D Bessie; 2.45 Choral service; Rev C Herbert; 5 Ch E; 6.30 ES; Rev D Monteith. ST MARY'S CHURCH, W8: 9.15 HC: 11 S Euch. Missa brevis (Vadiana); The Recor. ST JAMES'S CHURCH, W1: 9.15 HC: 11 S Euch. Rev M Robins; 5.45 EP. ST JAMES'S CHURCH, W2: 10.30 S Euch. Missa brevis (Raddiffo); Rev B Wilson; 6.30 EP. ST LUKES, SW3: 10.30 S Euch. Teach me O Lord (Byrd); Rev D Bessie; 12.15 HC: 6.30 E. A: Lord let me know mine end (Green); Rev J Stebbing. ST MARK'S, NW1: 8 HC: 9.45 Family C: 11 S Euch. Mercedes; Rev T Devonshire Jones. ST MARGARET'S, SW1: 11 S Euch. Rt Rev G Connor. ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS, WC2: 8 HC: 9.45 Euch; 11.30 Visitation service; Rev D Bessie; 2.45 Choral service; Rev C Herbert; 5 Ch E; 6.30 ES; Rev D Monteith. ST MARY ABBOTS CHURCH, W8: 8 HC: 9.30 Euch. Rev F Gelli; 11.15 Ch M; 12.30 HC: 6.30 ES; Rev D Monteith. ST MARY'S, SW1: 9. 10 LM: 11 HM. Missa quatuor tons (Lassus); Bishop of Wangarata: 6 S; 10.15 HC: 11.15 Ch M; 12.30 HC: 6.30 ES; Rev D Monteith. ST MARY'S, NW1: 10.30 Euch. Adagio from symphonie pastorale (Widor). ST MARY'S, W1: 11.30 HC: 11 Ch Euch. Hummel in B flat; Bishop of Mauritius; 6.30 Choral Healing service; Professor J Caldwell. ST PAUL'S, SW1: 8. 9 HC: 11 Sol Euch.; Rev C Courtfield. ST PETER'S, SW1: 10 Family Euch; 11 S Euch. Mass for three voices (Byrd); Father E Shaver. ST PETER'S CHAPEL, Wellington Barracks, SW1: 11 Ch Euch. Missa solenne Christi muneris (Palestrina); O beata et gloriosa trinitas (Palestrina); Band of the Life Guards; Rev J T Skirrow. ST PETER'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, SE10: 11 S Euch. Sunston in F; A: genitrix genitricque (Victoria); Rev R Norton.

Compiled by Deborah King



The li

'I could refuse to let people on if they were drunk, but then I'd go home with an empty bus, wouldn't I?'

Never fear, Trevor's here

Anyone who lives in the country and has teenagers is aware of a horrible transport problem, not mentioned by John Prescott in his recent White Paper. It concerns rural adolescents who are too young or too impoverished to drive, have no public transport to call on, but are determined to go out at night and meet the opposite sex. Normally the only way they can do this is by forcing their parents to drive them about in the early hours of the morning.

If you are one of these parents, you'll know that the worst part of being a nighttime chauffeur is not so much the fatigue but the feeling of being an object of hideous embarrassment, someone so unfashionable, elderly and low-status that you do not even merit being spoken to.

One adult that children do like being picked up by is a 55-year-old ex-marine called Trevor Allen. In my part of the West Country he has become a minor celebrity because he is trying to solve the teenage transport problem by running night buses. He started six years ago with a Saturday run to the seaside resort of Sidmouth, and this year he is applying to

extend his route to include Exmouth and Exeter, and all the villages in between.

What is unusual about his service is that it is exactly tailored to the needs of teenagers. For a start, it's very cheap. He charges a flat rate of £1 per trip per person, no matter where his customers get on. For children in the most remote villages, where his route begins, that means a ten-mile journey for £1. He has been told, by other coach-drivers, that he is charging too little, but that's the whole point. "Money isn't my prime concern. I've never had money, and I never will, and what you don't have, you don't miss. Kids haven't got bottomless pockets. If I charged more, they wouldn't have enough left over for a good night out."

Not only is his fare minuscule, but sometimes he does not get it at all. If a youngster runs out of money he lets them on anyway. "I'm not going to leave them

behind, am I?" Trev, a small, frail-looking husband and father with tattoos, gold-rimmed spectacles and sucked-back, 1960s-style hair, has his own taxi firm and has arranged his bus service around the ideal teenage evening timetable. He takes passengers on their outward journey just after high tea, and makes two trips to pick them up: one after the pubs close and another when the nightclubs finish. He is entirely realistic about the difficulties this lays him open to. "There are regulations for operating a public service, and I could refuse to let people on

DOWN TO EARTH



LUCY PINNEY

if they were drunk — but then I'd go home with an empty bus, wouldn't I?" There was once a fight on his coach that was too vicious to break up and he called the police on his mobile.

That fight involved two 20-year-olds but he has always managed the younger pugilists on his own. "It's difficult to put into words how I do it. Kids know how far they can go. I wouldn't sort it out with my fists. I'd get them to stop and listen."

My son, who travels on Trevor's bus regularly, says that his control is awesome. There are boys on his service who terrify their peers —

gigantic, seemingly uncontrollable creatures — but who knuckle under to Trevor and apologise humbly to him if they are caught stepping out of line.

Most of the time, though, Trevor's bus is like a travelling party with music, conversation and laughter — and frequent stops to dart into the bushes. At the tail end of the night, as Trevor drives into more and more remote areas, dropping stragglers off, it gets quieter. He reckons it is safe to allow boys to walk home a mile or so at 3am but he never, ever, lets girls get off his bus on their own if they have a long journey ahead of them. He drives them to their door instead. "It's a pain in the burn sometimes, but the alternative is worse. Supposing they got attacked?"

It is when the bus is quiet that another, subtler element of Trevor's service comes

into play. He listens to adolescent problems and offers advice. "I've been crying a lot of these kids about for six years now, and it's become a special relationship. There are things I know about them that their parents don't. Aspects of their social life and love life. If they tell it a secret, I never pass it on."

It would be a mistake to underrate his sympathetic ear: in my village alone there have been two recent youthful suicides, and the more people teenagers confide in, the more people teenagers confide in.

Trevor is convinced that the extra revenue John Prescott is proposing for rural buses will not benefit him. This is because the routes Trevor runs have not been devised by any county council or ordered for. They are Trevor's own invention and the only financial help he will ever receive is a rebate on his fuel duty. He reckons the job is still worth doing, though. "It's nice to be treated the way the kids treat me — like an uncle or old brother. I know they appreciate what do. It shows in lots of ways. My coach never trashed and I must be the only driver who gets hugged by his customers."

Saving the lungs of our cities

Brownfield urban sites earmarked for new houses are green oases vital for wildlife, says Nick Nuttall



Urban wildlife: a blackbird feeds its young, small tortoiseshell butterfly, buddleia in full bloom, below

They are the Cinderellas of nature conservation: inner-city land areas ranging from tiny scraps to large tracts, which have become prized as places to exercise the dogs, go newt-ing in the summer holidays or take a lunchtime stroll admiring the wild flowers.

These sites are the countryside on our urban doorstep, born out of Hitler's bombs, stum clearance or industrial decay. They can contain the relics of long-forgotten forests, heaths and wetlands. And they are under threat as never before from the social upheavals of the late 20th century.

Government forecasts estimate that more than 4.4 million new homes will be needed



in England alone by 2016 to meet demand caused by demographic changes, sparking fears that vast swathes of countryside will be bulldozed over. However, there are experts who believe that urban wildlife sites, rather than those in



Professor Chris Baines enjoys a rare piece of wild greenery in Wolverhampton: "Interest in the environment has for too long been focused on rural areas"

the country, will suffer drastically as ministers and councils attempt to steer more home-building into the inner cities on to so-called brownfield sites.

Professor Chris Baines, a veteran environmentalist, an

author, and president of the Urban Wildlife Partnerships, says: "Clearly, I do not want to see beautiful parts of the countryside lost to building. But equally, people do not want to see these areas, where they built their first dens or saw their first butterfly, disappear either."

"My home-made bramble jelly is made from blackberries which grew on a brownfield site. I spent my childhood getting mucky on brownfield sites and now, in hectic middle age, it is the brownfield land in Britain's towns and cities which gives me a green leafy view from the trains on which I travel."

Professor Baines cites a scrap of anonymous land near his home in Wolverhampton which has been "untouched for 30 years" and is home to foxes, butterflies such as red admirals and small tortoiseshells, masses of blooming buddleia, the songs of wrens and blackbirds, kestrels soar above.

"Most brownfields are not brown at all, they are green, and are far too valuable to be dismissed as wasteland which is good for nothing but redevelopment," he says.

In a bid to raise the political profile of such sites and improve their condition, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) has launched a week-long urban environment initiative. The BTCV is a charity which runs community-based environmental programmes and which is a key player in the Government's Environmental Task Force for the unemployed.

Local people, including children, are being encouraged to take part and a handbook has been published to explain how to become an environmental volunteer, Professor Baines, who is helping to organise the event, says: "Interest in the environment has for too long been focused on rural areas. But 90 per cent of people live in cities and towns."

Many people want to do more for the environment but often feel powerless to deal with issues such as global warming, the spread of deserts and the loss of tropical rainforests. This offers volun-

teers the chance to make a difference from clearing a local pond of old shopping trolleys to planting trees and building footpaths.

"And they do not have to get into their cars to do it. This is environmental action within walking distance of home," says Professor Baines, adding that the importance of protecting and developing urban wildlife sites has never been higher. The vegetation and trees help to filter out traffic fumes and soak up rain from thunderstorms which, in turn, reduces flooding.

He says the urban back garden, where butterflies come to feed on bedding plants, where finches and tits snack on peanuts and scraps and where foxes come to play, can be described as "wildlife service stations". The animals which visit these gardens live elsewhere — on the urban green spaces now targeted for development where they breed, sleep and rest.

If these urban beauty spots are lost to development or neglect, then many of the natural joys of the city garden will disappear too, he claims. "Cities have become vital refuges for many plants and animals."

The complex mosaic of railway land, old mineral workings, demolished factories, old waste tips, neglected allotments and canals constitutes a huge network of wildlife habitats often free from pesticide, herbicides and the intensive agriculture that has damaged much of the countryside.

HOW CLEAN IS YOUR VALLEY?



Volunteers hard at work cleaning urban rubbish from a pond in Glasgow

- Events being run this month by the BTCV:
 - Norwich, Aug 1 and 2: Building a circular board walk at Earlham Marsh to improve access (01603 767300).
 - Bolton, Aug 2: Path-clearing starts at Philip Park, Whitefield (0161-796 6404).
 - Bury and Rochdale, Aug 2: Building steps and footpaths at Green Booth reservoir, Astworth Valley (0161-796 6404).
 - London, Aug 2: Cutting grass by hand at Highgate Cemetery, Aug 4-5: Creating paths at Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith, Aug 6: Coppicing woodland and clearing scrub on Hampstead Heath (0171-278 4294).
 - Bristol, Aug 3 and 4: Developing a wildflower meadow, bog garden and walkways at Hillfield Park (0117-929 0533).
 - Swansea, Aug 4, 5 and 6: Clearing scrap and dumped cars from Kilyve Hill. Children

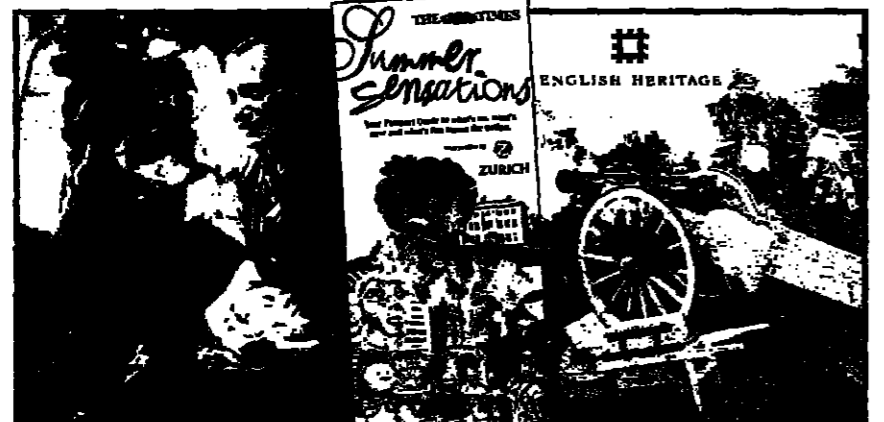
- will also be working with a local sculptor and improving footpaths (01792 456224).
- Cheshire, Aug 5: Developing footpaths and steps at Rixton Clay Pits, Warrington Aug 6: Starting a wildflower garden at Wallasey School, Weaverham (01244 300521).
- Orkney, Aug 1-9: Restoring a bothy with slates and turf on the Isle of Hoy (018 81560).

Contacts: The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, 36 St Mary's Street, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 0EU (01491 839766) The Urban Wildlife Partnerships, The Glen, Witham Park, Waterside South, Linden LN5 7JR; The National Urban Forestry Unit, Syon Park, Stafford Road, Wolverhampton WV10 9RT; The Federation of City Farms, Kereford Street, Bedminster, Bristol BS3 4NA

READER OFFER THE TIMES

PASSPORT TO A SENSATIONAL SUMMER

FROM DINOSAURS TO DUNGEONS, CASTLES TO CONCERTS, TRAINS TO TEDDIES...



Collage of the Edinburgh Festival

Readers of *The Times* can take advantage of exclusive discounts and special concessions to many fantastic events taking place all over the UK by using our exclusive Passport Card, compiled in association with worldwide financial experts Zurich Insurance.

English Heritage — Scarborough Castle, North Yorkshire: Times Passport Card holders receive 2 for 1 admission at the exciting Siege of Scarborough, a colourful and dramatic replay of a battle which happened 350 years ago. Gates open from midday on Saturday and Sunday, August 15 and 16. Buy one adult ticket for £3.50 and you receive another adult ticket FREE. Call 01723 372451 for more details. Call 0171-973 9434 for a free diary listing of more than 600 exciting English Heritage events taking place at properties around the country.

A TASTE OF WHAT YOU WILL SEE AND SAVE

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL — CALIGULA: One of the Netherlands' top theatre companies, Het Zuidelijk Toneel, presents *Caligula* at the Edinburgh Festival on September 2 and 3 at the Edinburgh Playhouse. This is a radical production of Albert Camus's classic tragedy by director Ivan Hovde. *Caligula* dominates the play, directing himself and the world through the use of an on-stage cameraman and video screens. Times readers receive a 20 per cent discount on tickets which cost from £10-£22. To book call 0131-473 2000 and quote *The Times* Offer.

*Some London and South East editions of *meteo* may carry an Irish version of this offer. If you are resident in the UK you can still send for your Passport Guide by completing the application form in *meteo*.

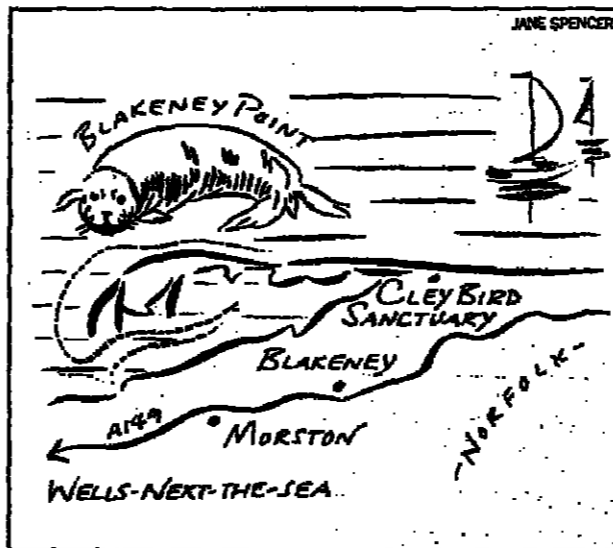


CHANGING TIMES

ON THE SPOT: BLAKENEY POINT

The place: Blakeney Point, Norfolk. The view: A vast stretch of marshland with sailing ships fishing boats dotting the horizon. On bright, warm days a colony of seals basks on the sandy bank. Historical interest: Blakeney Point, owned by the National Trust since 1912, became a nature reserve in 1994. How to get there: Take a ferry from Morston Quay to Blakeney Point. If the seals are basking, the boat will pass by for a closer sighting. The trip takes about 30 minutes and you can return by boat or walk to Cley over the sand dunes and along the shingle coast path. Best time to visit: Depending on the tide, boats operate or twice a day until November. OS ref: 468/004 on sheet 133. Also nearby: Cley Bird Sanctuary, known as a mecca for ornithologists. Wells-Next-The-Sea is six miles west.

DEBORAH KING



The life and time of jailbirds

Prisoners allowed to keep a pet bird find it helps them cope better with life in the cells, says Jonathan Green

Hunkered behind bars, the prisoner in cell 420 in Albany Prison's E Wing seized the chance of a jailbreak. Beyond the high walls topped with razor wire, spotlights and closed-circuit television, there was a glimpse of freedom through a window that had been accidentally left open.

Gathering all reserves of courage and strength, the prisoner darted through the window and soared over the walls with ease. It was a successful escape from the drab category-B prison on the Isle of Wight which had managed to hold the inmate for only seven weeks.

Yet you have to consider that the escaper was called Amy, not really the name for a hardened con, and that she was the beloved budgie of John, one of the prison's lifers.

According to one guard, John was almost inconsolable after the loss of his cellmate and jailbird. He had opened his cell window while shaving, giving Amy the opportunity to escape. He had forgotten that she was not in her cage.

Long-term prisoners have always been allowed to keep budgies in their cells, thanks to an obscure order. Birds doing bird is such a fundamental part of prison life that several prisons in Britain have their own aviaries tended by in-



For Richard Elcombe, an inmate serving life in Albany Prison on the Isle of Wight, keeping budgerigars has helped him come to terms with his sentence and made his time behind bars more bearable.

‘It is therapy for them to look after a budgie, it helps them to relax’

mates who seek something other than the standard prison violence and drug-taking.

The headman of Albany is Richard Elcombe, a diminutive lifer in his late forties with a con's hairstyle and matching stare. He has so far served nine years of a life sentence. "Since I've been looking after the budgies, my time has flown," he says, unaware of the pun.

Aside from the girly posters on the walls of his spartan cell, there is a cage in one corner containing a yellow budgie. "I call it all the names under the sun, not any particular one," he says. He makes squeaking noises and it happily chirrups back.

Mr Elcombe runs the prison aviary as well as doing gardening duties. From 14 budgies bought at a knockdown price from a local pet shop, he has since bred 43 birds. The breeding season runs from March to October and summer is when he is busiest.

His chest puffs with pride as he claims Albany is the first prison to breed Albino and Lutino budgies, two of the rarer strains among the hundred or so breeds.

The birds are sold to other prisoners or guards. The standard price is £5.50 — the entire weekly wage for a prisoner. They must also own a cage, normally costing about £15.

A prisoner wanting the privilege of having a bird in his cell — the only female company he may keep before release — has to prove he is dedicated. He must not only wait eight weeks until the birds reach maturity, but must also put aside a month's wages for cage and bird.

On top is upkeep, with seed costing £20 a week. In two years Mr Elcombe has had to call an outside vet only twice, so vets' bills do not really count.

The authorities, however, may not look so kindly on budgies at times. One bird was taught to insult the governor every time he walked past. Yet the benefits to the long-term prisoners are clear, says Stephen Rowe, a prison warden.



A budgie doing time in Albany



Burt Lancaster playing the American prisoner with his feathered friends, in *Birdman of Alcatraz*

"They can be terribly cut up about it if they lose the birds or if they die," he says.

A budgie fanatic himself, it is a curious anomaly that he and Mr Elcombe potter around their aviary like two old friends. All the enmities between guard and prisoner are forgotten.

"Richard hasn't been on report all the time I've known him," he says. "In fact, he's really come out of himself. Before, he used to be very shy and hardly said a word."

Mr Elcombe is a taciturn man who had no interest in birds before being jailed. But he is gushing when he describes the joy that his

budgies bring to other prisoners.

"The people in here have been bullied all their lives," he says. "It is therapy for them to look after a budgie, something smaller and more defenceless than them. It helps relax them. Obviously prison is a very stressful place and lots of people just go under. But instead they can sit for hours and talk to their budgies."

Although it has not been unknown for prisoners to exchange birds for an ounce of tobacco if times get hard, there is a blacklist of prisoners deemed too irresponsible to have birds. Mr Elcombe recalls one prisoner who broke his

budgie's legs because he could not stand it fluttering around his cell.

But Mr Rowe explains that the punishment was swift. He says: "He was taken care of by the other inmates, if you know what I mean. In here they'll beat each other up as a matter of course. But they'll do anything for a budgie. They won't stand for cruelty."

Amy's fate after the breakout is unknown. In true *Papillon* style, getting off the island is no easy task and she would have had to contend with seagulls and sparrow hawks to reach the mainland.

However, one bird found a far easier escape today. He just passed through the 14ft steel gates and then the heavy timelock gates at the prison entrance.

"My girlfriend and I had decided that a budgie was the perfect pet for our London flat. So Mr Elcombe was pleased to oblige. Considering his pedigree, we have named our budgie Al, after the gangster Al Capone. Slowly, he is readjusting to life on the outside. But as he stares from his cage, you cannot help feeling that to Al, one cage is pretty much like another. We hope he does not always feel like a jailbird."

BUTTERFLY REPORT

Essex skipper, for certain

For years I have wanted to see an Essex skipper. This is not a girl about whom lewd jokes are made, but a tiny, golden-brown butterfly. I have probably set eyes on thousands of them, but until last week I had never identified one for certain.

The skippers are unusual butterflies. When they settle on a leaf or a flower, they look more like moths than butterflies, for generally they do not spread their wings flat and their forewings raised at 45 degrees.

There is a large skipper which has dappled wings, and a small skipper whose wings are a more uniform golden-brown. Both are common in the southern half of England, and many people will have seen them resting on bramble bushes or exploring the purple flowers of knapweed and thistles in July and August. There are several rarer species of skipper. And there is also the joker in the pack, the Essex skipper.

The Essex skipper is so much like the small skipper that it was only distinguished as a separate species in the heyday of Victorian insect collecting in 1890. It was first identified on the Essex coast, which is how it acquired its name. Now it is known to haunt grassy places all along the Thames estuary and out into the chalky hills of southeastern England, with more distant colonies in Wiltshire and Devon.

It is hard to distinguish from the small skipper. It can only be confidently identified by two tiny black specks that are in a fiendishly difficult place to see — on the undersides of the tips of the antennae on the butterfly's head.

Butterflies' antennae generally culminate in a minute knob. On the small skipper, these knobs are golden. On the Essex skipper, they are golden on the top but you can make out that the bottoms of the knobs are black. Skipper butterflies are very hard

to get close to. With the faintest movement of the air towards them, or even the approach of a shadow, they are off.

How many times have I not moved slowly towards one and leaped over it, only to have it shoot up and flutter off. I see the golden uppersides of the antennae tips — but it is not enough. What colour are they below? Occasionally I have had a brief impression of all-gold knobs and so have been fairly sure that I was looking at a small skipper. As it is much commoner than the Essex skipper, I can reasonably assume that many of the ones I see belong to that species. Until last week I was never sure that I had really seen an Essex skipper.

It was a dull morning. I was walking along a path at the edge of a chalky field, with plenty of wild flowers under the hedge. But there were not many butterflies about — one or two small tortoiseshells and meadow browns, and a few skippers — and they were fairly sluggish.

Then I saw a skipper hanging on to one of the lilting scabious flowers. Time for another try. I thought, wearily, I quietly put my glasses on and leaned carefully forward. No movement. The butterfly seemed docile. But the way it was hanging on the flower left only its upper side visible. I could make out the orangey top halves of the antennae knobs. But, as delicately as I could, I took hold of the stem and bent it slowly back. I held my breath, but the butterfly was lethargic and did not move. I bent the flower back further — and the undersides of the antennae came into view.

There they were — gleamingly black. I stared in triumph at these tiny scraps of animate life. Then I let go of the stem and the butterfly trundled away. I had seen my first Essex skipper.

DERWENT MAY



The common small skipper



The unusual Essex skipper

ADOPT US



TIM and TOM are nine-year old, neutered, black and white border collies who were brought in to the Wood Green Animal Shelter last March after their owner fell ill. They are good-natured, friendly dogs, but would need a home where they could remain together — and one without cats.

If you are interested in adopting Tim and Tom, please contact WGAS (01480 830014) quoting references: KD98314/5.

Q My grandson Harry (nearly eight) took me to a pet show last week. He was fascinated by the rats and I found them more acceptable than I would have thought possible, so much so that I have promised to buy him a pair for his forthcoming birthday. His parents are unenthusiastic but resigned. A friend, who was a nurse, is horrified at the idea. She says rats spread Weil's disease, a fatal liver and kidney infection. Is this so and is there a risk?

A *Leptospira*, the bacteria responsible for Weil's disease, occurs in many wild and domesticated animals, certainly in wild rats, but also in foxes, dogs and cattle. There is no reason to expect the infection in "jancy" rats and the risk of catching disease from a healthy pet rat is about the same as that of being struck by lightning. I think rats are one of the best of the little furry pets for children. To discover more, and to find sources of well socialised healthy young rats, write to: The National Fancy Rat Society, 14 Clayhall House, Somers Close, Reigate, Surrey RH2 9EB, enclosing an SAE. If Harry is on the Internet, the website is <http://www.cabled.co.uk/nfrs>

Q Our 11-year-old collie-labrador cross has always been very healthy, but four months ago she had a fit, and 13 days later another one. It lasted about two minutes and she was waddling on her feet for a quarter of an hour afterwards. She has had two more fits since and recovered very quickly each time.

Our vet has done blood tests and X-rayed her but found nothing. We have been told a brain tumour is a possibility and a brain scan might help diagnose this, but it is unlikely that anything could be done should a tumour be the cause. Is it worth having a scan done and could there be any other cause?

A VET WRITES

A Brain tumours are rare and treatment is rarely successful. They are progressive and some other signs of deterioration would be expected after four months. Your bitch seems to be stable since there has been no increase in the number, or severity, of fits. A scan might diagnose but it would not cure the problem.

There are several other possible causes. Primary epilepsy is one, although this usually shows itself in the first few years of life. In an older dog, an impaired blood supply to parts of the brain is a possible cause and you may never find out why. If the fits do not become any more frequent or severe, they are not worrying your dog very much. Keep a diary of what happens so that your vet has accurate information over a period of time to help him decide the best course to follow.

Q A number of tortoises have "disappeared" in our area so we are considering marking the undershell with an ultra-violet pen. Could this harm them?

A Marking on the plastron (the undershell) or the carapace (the upper one) will not harm them. But would anyone finding a wandering tortoise think of using ultra-violet light to establish ownership? When the sale and importation of tortoises was restricted in 1984 they became valuable for a time but now the value is much less. In midsummer, male tortoises can go walkabout in search of a female and the old devil sex, rather than theft, could explain the "disappearances".

JAMES ALLCOCK

Write to The Times Vet, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.

THE TIMES WEEKEND · SATURDAY AUGUST 1 1998

This week's challenge was, well, to be indecisive, but then again it could be that David Bowker was in two minds

This week's challenge was originally meant to be about calling out random insults at strangers for a week. But I couldn't decide whether this was a fitting subject for a family newspaper. Also, what if some of those strangers were contemplating suicide? Shouting "balloon-head" or "hairy legs" at such unfortunates might push them over the brink.

More to the point, what if some of my victims retaliated, calling me "small column" or worse? What if I accidentally offended an escaped murderer? Was any newspaper article worth dying for? I just couldn't make up my mind. So I chose to capitalise on my mood by being indecisive for a week. Perhaps being decisive would have been more of a challenge. I mean, your guess is as good as mine. But it might not be.

At luncheon on Monday, I strolled across to my local. The landlord, a surly brute with a broken nose and a marriage to match, greeted me with his usual sullen nod. I said: "I'd like a pint of your best bitter. No, make that your worst bitter. No, a pint of Guinness. Better

make that half a pint. Actually, no, no, forget that. Give me a gin and tonic. A gin and orange. I mean a William of Orange. No, I was right first time. A pint of bitter, please."

After glaring at me for a moment the landlord said: "Are you being funny?" I said: "I don't know. I can't make my mind up."

On Wednesday morning, someone knocked on the door. It was a Jehovah's Witness who introduced himself as Paul and asked me if I knew that the hour of the Kingdom was nigh. I normally hide from Jehovahs, but this week I felt a curious affinity. They know the world is going to end, but they can never decide when. When Paul told me that the devil was corrupting young people with pop music and short skirts, I wasn't sure whether to laugh or cry, so I merely nodded. This turned out to be a grave

mistake. On Thursday, Paul returned with reinforcements. Although I saw them coming I couldn't decide where to hide. So they caught me. And the world is going to end next Tuesday.

On Friday night, I sat down to watch TV with my wife but I couldn't stop flicking from channel to channel. She told me to get out of the house or face the consequences. I surprised myself by coming to a decision. I went to the pictures. When I arrived at the cinema, I was spoiled for choice. There were eight films on offer and all of them were hopeless. After some deliberation, I decided that the

least hopeless were *Godzilla* and *Lost in Space*. I wanted to see *Lost in Space* because I like Man Le Blane. But because I hate anything about space I bought a ticket for *Godzilla*.

Due to the school holidays, the cinema was full of teenagers who wouldn't stop talking. When the

main feature started I could barely hear the appalling dialogue. I went out to the foyer and asked the cashier if I could watch *Lost in Space* instead. She said this would be fine as long as I paid again. I couldn't decide whether this was fair or not, but I handed over my money anyway. Hardly anyone had turned up to see

Lost in Space so I had a choice of seats. First I sat at the back. Then I moved to the front row. But staring up at the screen gave me a stiff neck, so I lay down in the aisle and had a nap. When I awoke, I decided that I shouldn't have been charged twice after watching only five minutes of *Godzilla*.

So I went out to have a word with the manager. To my annoyance the manager had gone home for the night. I watched the end of *Lost in Space*. The cashier had refused to let me in unless I paid again. Unable to decide whether she was an idiot or a moron, I gave up. I got into my car and drove off. The petrol tank was nearly empty but I couldn't decide which garage to go to. In the end, I drove around aimlessly until the engine conked out. I decided to walk home. Actually, I didn't decide, I had no choice in the matter.

I do. No, I don't. I'm not sure

SEVEN LONG DAYS



YES IT'S A VERY DIFFICULT DECISION BUT IF IT WAS ME I'D DEFINITELY GO FOR THE CHEESE AND ONION



WEEKEND COURSES AND ACTIVITIES

AUGUST 7-9

A banjo weekend. At the Beroslow Music Trust, Hitchin, Herts (01462 459446). Price, £105 residential, £85 non-residential.

Mosaic art summer school with Marvyn Cheek at Daedalian Glass, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancs (01253 702531). Price for three days, including instruction and meals, £211. Accommodation available.

Hand building with clay. A stained-glass workshop. Both this weekend at Creative Courses, Barham Farmhouse, East Hoathly, Lewes, Sussex (01825 841464). Price per course, £100. Accommodation available.

Folk summer school: Spanish literature, embroidery, silversmithing and jewellery making. All this weekend at the Knuston Hall Residential College, Irchester, Wellingborough, Northants (01933 312104). Price per course, £92.

Wildlife television, an insider's story. English parish churches, getting to know them better. Both this weekend at the Maryland College, Woburn, Beds (01525 292901). Price per course, £99.

Map and compass work for walkers. Wine appreciation. Oriental dancing. A painting course. A varied selection of activities this weekend at the Old Rectory, Fittleworth, Putborough, Sussex (01798 865306). Price per course, from £114 residential, £90 non-residential.

Fly-fishing in Hampshire. Cover-

ing every aspect of the sport with plenty of time for fishing. With Fishing Breaks (0171-359 8818), Day rate, £89, weekend course, £159, accommodation available.

Trends in domestic architecture: the portrait in the Italian Renaissance. Japanese architecture, gardens and the teal culture. All this weekend at the University of Cambridge, Madingley Hall (01954 210636). Price, £120 all inclusive.

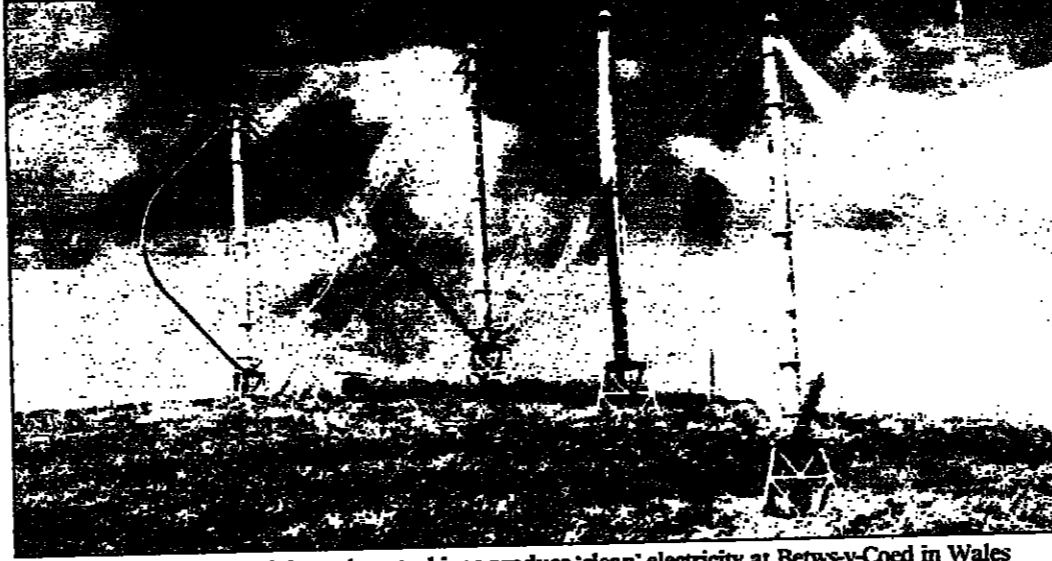
Hang-gliding. Two-night breaks with expert tuition and short tethered flights. At the YHA Centre, Ectate, Derbyshire (01433 670302). Price, £172 all inclusive.

Investigating crop circles. Decorative folk art. At Urchfont Manor College, Devizes, Wiltshire (01380 840495). Price per course, £104 residential, £99 non-residential.

Otters. At the Preston Montford Field Studies Centre, Shrewsbury, Salop (01743 850380). Price, £135 residential, £100 non-residential.

Family activities. Dinghy sailing, canoeing, surfing, rafting, abseiling. At the Skern Lodge Centre, Appledore, Bideford, Devon (01237 475992). Children from age seven, fully qualified staff. Weekend price, all inclusive, £100.

Conservation activities in all parts of Britain with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (01491 839766). Footpath repair, dry stone walling, botany, fossil hunting. Price per three-day weekend, all inclusive, £100.



Blowing in the wind: learn how turbines produce 'clean' electricity at Betws-y-Coed in Wales

Centre, Dorking, Surrey (01306 883949). Price, £112 residential, £88 non-residential.

AUGUST 14-16

Cabinet making: caring for furniture. All weekend at West Dean College, Chichester, Sussex (01234 811301). Price, £156 inclusive.

Let's play jazz. Clothes making. The video camcorder. Mixed lace for all. All this weekend at the Knuston Hall Residential College, Irchester, Wellingborough, Northants (01933 312104). Price per course, £92 all inclusive.

Beethoven's piano sonatas: Hidden voices. Pen and ink drawing techniques. All this weekend at the University of Cambridge, Madingley Hall (01954 210636). Price per course, £120 inclusive.

Walking in Constable country. Painting flowers and trees in a gar-

den setting. At the Field Studies Council Centre, Flatford Mill, East Bergholt, Colchester, Essex (01206 295283). Price per course, £140 residential, £110 non-residential.

gliding school with qualified BHPA staff. Two-day initial course, £110. All equipment provided. Accommodation available.

Microflight flying. At Rufforth Airfield, East Rufforth, York (01904 738877). Trial flights and full courses in all aspects of microflight flying.

Age 16-plus. BMAA day courses. Trial lesson, £35. Four-day courses, £495. Accommodation available.

Dinghy sailing, windsurfing, canoeing, power-boating. All weekend at the Grafham Water Centre, Perry, Huntingdon, Cambs (01480 810521). Weekend rates from £69, accommodation available.

Parachuting. With The Wild Geese Skydiving Centre, Colraine, Northern Ireland (012665 58609). Round and square jumps, tandem jumps, sky diving training. Prices from £120. All instructors BPA licensed.

Summer flowers of south Devon. At the Slapton Ley Field Centre, Kingsbridge, Devon (01548 580466). Price per course, £135 residential, £101 non-residential.

AUGUST 21-23

Ballroom dancing. At the Burton Manor College, South Wirral, Cheshire (0151-336 5172). Price £98, inclusive.

Rock Climbing for Women. At the Castle Head Field Centre, Grange-over-Sands (015395 34300). Cumbria. Price, £120 residential, £96 non-residential.

Writing your life story: Chinese

brush painting. Both this weekend at the Knuston Hall Residential College, Irchester, Wellingborough, Northants (01933 312104). Price per course, £92.

Tarot reading. At the Mountain Hall Centre, Queensbury, West Yorkshire (01274 816258). Price, £60. Accommodation from £25 per night, half board.

Introduction to water plants. At the Scottish Field Studies Kindrogan Field Centre, Blairgowrie, Perthshire (01250 881286). Price, £136.

Spoken voices: Virgil's Aeneid, book 2. English misericords and related church carvings: Practical drawing and painting — colour and landscape. All at the University of Cambridge, Madingley Hall (01954 210643). Drawing and painting course, £180, others, £120.

Drawing and painting out of doors: Improve your watercolours: Walking Constable country. All weekend at the Flatford Mill Field Study Centre, East Bergholt, Colchester, Essex (01206 295283). Price per course, £140 residential, £110 non-residential.

The island of Steepholm: The Amish people and their quilts. At the Urchfont Manor College, Devizes, Wilt (01380 840495). Price per course, £101 inclusive.

Pony trekking in the Black Mountains of Gwent. Grange Trekking of Capel-y-Flyn, Abergavenny (01873 890215). Age from five plus. Weekend price, £120 inclusive.

ROBIN NEILLANDS

FAX: 0171 782 7930

SHOPAROUND

TO ADVERTISE CALL: 0171 680 6860

SEND NO MONEY NOW!

SAND, CAT HAIRS, DUST AND DUST MITES, NOTHING GETS BY MY 8 1/2lb ORECK XL.



The favourite of thousands of hotels and more than 1 million users. Now use the incredibly powerful Oreck XL vacuum, with its special top-fill design, to clean your own home better than ever.

Try the Oreck XL risk free for 15 days.

There's no obligation. The exclusive Filter System assures hypo-allergenic cleaning with Germastat®. There's virtually no after dust.

It's the lightest full-size vacuum. Powerful pile-lifting roller brushes revolve at 6,500 rpm to remove embedded dirt.

The Oreck Helping Hand® handle is orthopaedically designed, no need to squeeze your hand or bend your wrist.

The Exclusive Microsweep® gets bare floors super clean, without manual adjustments.

10-year guarantee against breakages or burnout of the housing. Plus a 3-year motor guarantee.

Free Super Compact Canister, the handheldable 4-pound dynamo is so powerful it lifts a bowling ball. Cleans anywhere. FREE when you purchase the Oreck XL.

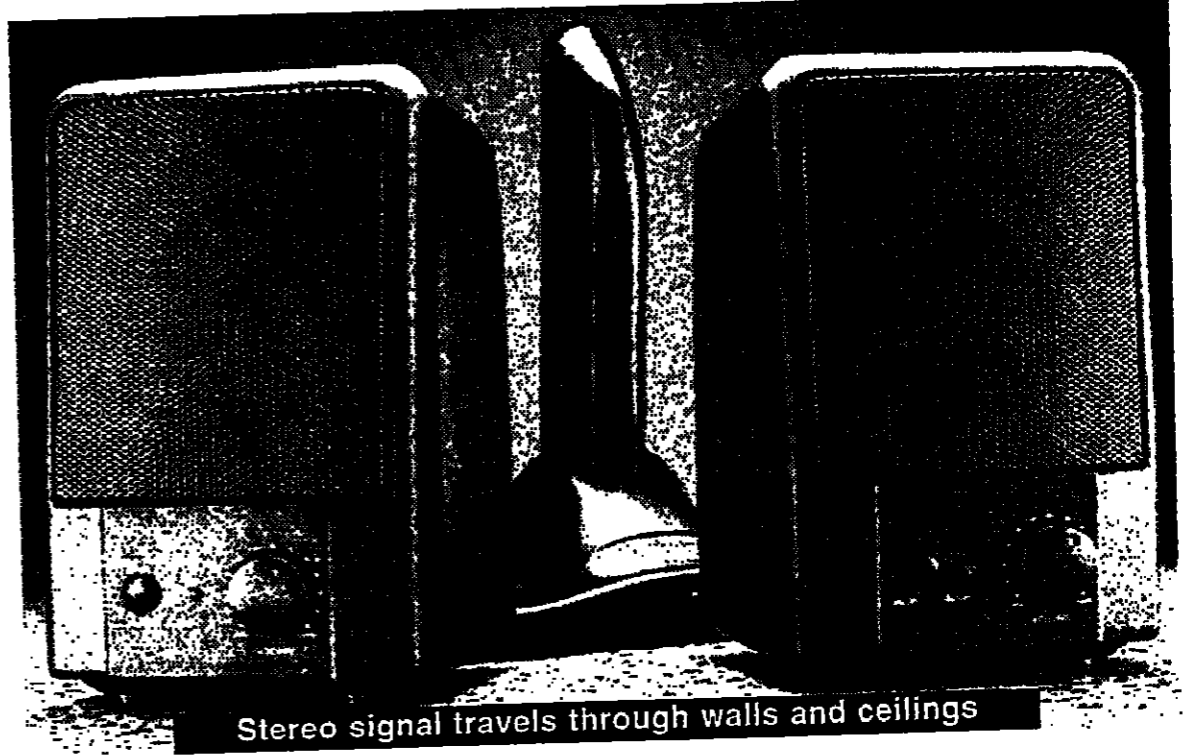
Try the Oreck XL risk free for 15 days If You Don't Love It You Don't Keep It

PHONE NOW ON 0800 684 684 ext 1835

The supplier of this product is Solestrac Ltd, an agent for Oreck Corporation, Cowley Bridge Road, Exeter, Devon EX4 5HQ.

Radio frequency cordless stereo speakers only £59.95 + p&p

Tune in around the house and outdoors



Stereo signal travels through walls and ceilings

Enjoy top quality stereo sound in any room, and even the garden with these high quality, radio frequency cordless speakers.

- Simply plug the transmitter into the headphone socket of your hi-fi or television set where it will send sound signals to the speakers
- Stereo signal transmits through walls and ceilings to enjoy music, radio shows, sports coverage and even television programmes in an entirely different room from where your television or sound system is situated
- No wiring required. Each speaker operated by 4xAA batteries (not supplied)
- Effective up to 30m/90ft away
- Volume adjustable
- Speakers and transmitter set - just £59.95+ p&p
- Extra sets of speakers only £49.95 + p&p.

The Selection

To order by post, please complete coupon and send to The Selection, (C982), Bellon Road West, Loughborough, Leics: LE11 5XL.

Product	Qty	Price	Total
C982/A495 Set of RF speakers & transmitter		£59.95	
C982/A496 Extra set of speakers		£49.95	
Please remember to add £2.50 p&p			£2.50
GRAND TOTAL			

I enclose a crossed cheque/PO of £_____ made payable to The Selection (on each parcel) or debit my Access/Visa/MasterCard account by the total above. Entry date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mr/Ms/Miss Initials Surname

Address: _____

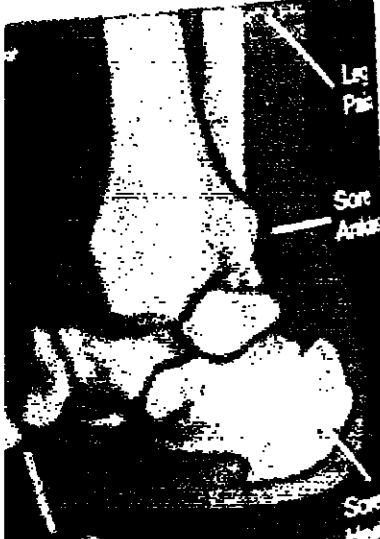
Postcode: _____ Daytime Tel. No. _____

Reg Office: The Selection (Headlines) Ltd, Bellon Road West, Loughborough LE11 5XL Reg No: 156688

Printed in Great Britain. Delivery on any other terms and conditions available to carefully selected companies whose goods or services may be of interest to the customer. If you prefer not to receive such offers please tick this box

C982

Laughing Matt



Instant Relief



سكذامن لإصل

WEEKEND SATURDAY AUGUST 1 1998

22

TRAVEL

TO ADVERTISE CALL: 0171 481 9889 (TRADE) 0171 481 4000 (PRIVATE) FAX: 0171 782 7824

CHECK-IN

HOTELS CAR HIRE TRAVEL INSURANCE TOURS CRUISES WORLDWIDE TAILORMADE

CURRENT BEST BUYS ON THE WORLD'S FINEST AIRLINES

Table with columns: FROM, ONE WAY RETURN, ONE WAY RETURN FROM, ONE WAY RETURN FROM. Lists cities like Sydney, Perth, Auckland, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Singapore, Bali, Tokyo, India and their respective flight prices.

TRAILFINDERS

PENANG, MALAYSIA RETURN FLIGHTS & 7 NIGHTS IN A FIRST CLASS BEACH HOTEL FROM ONLY £389*

42-50 EARLS COURT ROAD LONDON W8 6FT LONGHAUL TRAVEL: 0171-938 3366

PLUS DISCOUNTED QUALITY ACCOMMODATION PER ROOM PER NIGHT FROM AUSTRALIA £32 • USA £29 • AFRICA £39 • PACIFIC £46 • ASIA £20

THE TRAVEL EXPERTS ALL OUR TRAVEL CENTRES ARE OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

Australia New Zealand SAVE £150 AUSTRALIA FAR EAST FROM £474 NEW ZEALAND FROM £513

USA Canada USA FAR EAST FROM £192 CANADA FROM £276

Far East HONG KONG • THAILAND • BALI • MALAYSIA • BANGLKOK • SINGAPORE • INDIA • THAILAND FROM £465

Southern Africa SOUTH AFRICA FAR EAST FROM £405

TRAVEL INSURANCE HIGHEST QUALITY LOWEST PRICES COLOSSUS DIRECT LLOYDS TRAVEL INSURANCE

0870 737-7789

0870 737-7861

0870 737-7825

01420-88140 or 0171-287 5535

QUEST WORLDWIDE WORLDWIDE FLIGHTS SYDNEY PERTH AUCKLAND BANGKOK HONG KONG DELHI SINGAPORE DUBAI NAIROBI JO'BURG

PLATINUM TRAVEL ADVENTURE TRAVEL AND FLIGHTS AT AFFORDABLE PRICES CURRENT BEST BUYS SPECIAL OFFERS

DIAL-A-FLIGHT USA & CANADA CARIBBEAN EUROPE AUSTRALIA

SAVE ON TRAVEL INSURANCE SINGLE TRIP LONG STAY USA CAR HIRE TOP-UP SKI

Canada Affair Montreal £309 Toronto Ottawa Halifax Vancouver Winnipeg Calgary Edmonton

Direct Travel Insurance for top quality cover & value Worldwide Annual Multi-trip UK's best single trip rates from

Delta Vacations AMERICA Flights - Car hire - Cruises

travel mood BEST BUY FLIGHTS SYDNEY BRISBANE MELBOURNE PERTH CAIRNS JO'BURG

OVERSEAS EXPRESS FARESAVERS MALAGA ALICANTE PARIS MADRID BARCELONA

TRAVEL INSURANCE TAX FREEZE SAVE 13.5% INSURANCE PREMIUM TAX WITH CLUB DIRECT

SAFE HEALTHY TRAVEL INSURANCE Competitive rates

couple get saloon for a few dollars

Athens £69 easyJet

LE TRAVEL INSURANCE £16.45 POUR TWO WEEKS

JETLINE FLIGHT SEARCHERS

DEPARTURE GATE GLOBAL FLIGHTS FLIGHTSEEKERS

Debonair Daily scheduled flights from London Luton and London Gatwick

Steamy treatment is just the tonic



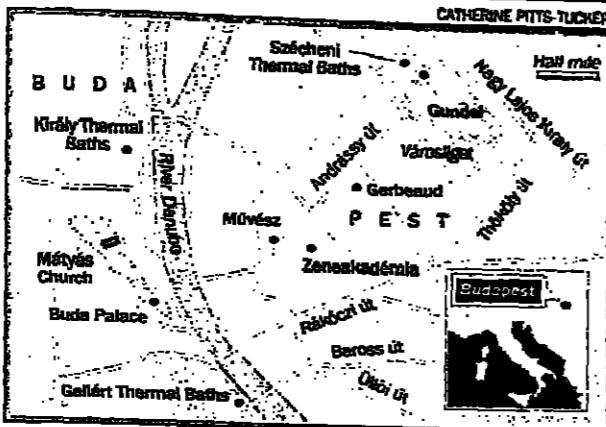
Following the trail of the pilgrims

Ontario • 25

THE TIMES TRAVEL

The Good Olde Days are still shining on

Skegness • 29



Steamy treatment is just the tonic

Melissa de Villiers gets a good soaking and pummelling on a spa-gazing trip to Budapest

WHERE DID MY WEEKEND GO?

Spa culture is as important to Budapest as café culture is to Paris. More than 120 thermal springs bubble up from the city's bedrock to feed local bathhouses, some built by the Ottomans 400 years ago. "Taking the cure" is a time-honoured tradition here; indeed, doctors actually prescribe state-subsidised spa visits and curative treatments.

chandeliers. It is one of the few businesses along here that still matches the boulevard's flamboyant proportions, unlike the clientele — elderly ladies with teetering lacquered hairdos, who gossip over coffee and whipped cream. 4.45pm: At last, I've made it to the spa, and I've even found the rest-rooms, the final stage of the purification process after a soak in the warm thermal pools and sweating in the sauna. Having survived an afternoon's crash course in the subtleties of Hungarian spa etiquette, I could do with a rest; there have been a couple of confusing moments.

"There is simply no room for British reserve amid all this near-naked flesh"

Friday 6am: Stumble out of bed and into an airport-bound taxi, clutching my smart new spikit — a pair of canary-yellow flip-flops. Eat your heart out, Manolo Blahnik! 8am: Take off. Sleep through the two-hour flight. Energy levels are at an all-time low. Noon (Hungarian time): Thanks to some nifty manoeuvring on the part of my taxi driver, we make it to my hotel in Pest in just 25 minutes. The place has its own sauna. I am tempted to dive straight in, but instead walk to the Széchenyi Baths, a turn-of-the-century spa conveniently housed according to my map — in nearby Városliget park. 12.30pm: Discover the Városliget actually lies, grill-like, beyond the farthest reaches of Andrásy út — Budapest's grandest boulevard. I seek refuge in Művészet, an elegantly faded Hapsburgian café complete with cloudy mirrors and

must tip the staff here, you know — they do expect it," boomed a bossy old gent — an ex-pat from his accent — in a minuscule thong. I retrieved my small change with as much dignity as anyone could muster wearing only a bedsheet (my hired "towel") and canary-coloured feet. Then there is the monumental scale of the place — laid out like a battered Ehrenheim around three outdoor pools (including a steamy one, where old men play chess on cork boards). I got lost trying to get from the towel-hire counter to the indoor baths. Yet despite the splendour of the buildings, the spa has a distinctly medicinal feel. I kept spotting lab-coated *művészet* in white socks and shoes, chivvying clients off down long strip-lit corridors.



Budapest's imposing art nouveau Gellért Bathhouse is an especially grand and extravagant place to "take the cure"

There is no room for British reserve amid all this near-naked flesh — of all ages and in every shade of collapse. Young lovers recline in each other's arms in the warm outdoor pool; families bicker amiably as the week's cares are steamed away. But I didn't like being wedged hip to hip in the sauna, sweat from other bodies trickling down my back. And although the changing rooms are pristine, there were some suspicious-looking substances in the outdoor thermal pool I wish I hadn't seen. 7.30pm: Drag tired limbs to the Grand restaurant for some fine traditional cuisine

with Barbara, a local business-woman I had met in London. The gypsy band whips up a tune as rich as my chocolate-covered pastiches as Barbara suggests a novel approach to spa-gazing. "A visit to the baths is a social activity," she says. "It's the same sort of relationship you have in Britain with your favourite pub. Find the spa that feels like home!" With at least ten more to choose from, I'll have to move fast.

Saturday 9.35am: Taxi over the Danube and into the Buda hills. Traditionally this is where the upper classes settled to escape polluted downtown Pest. Yet Buda — once a separate city in its own right — is also packed with bathhouses, a relic of a 150-year stretch as part of the Ottoman Empire. 9.45am: I feel like an extra in a *Carry On* film. Barbara has recommended the Király Baths, her favourite. Pasha Sokoli Mustapha of Buda built these graceful domed chambers in the 1560s; chipped, scruffy and somewhat down on their luck (like much of Budapest), they are nonetheless spicily clean. This is a woman-only day, yet everyone is sporting peculiar test-towel-sized aprons, issued to preserve our modesty. Today the language barrier is proving a problem. I had wanted to book a massage, but this place is off the tourist map, and unlike the Széchenyi Baths, it doesn't list any of its treatments in English. Despite my mime show, the receptionist just shrugged. Never mind, the big thermal pool is stunning. It is set in a dim, steamy room, where the

sunlight streams through tiny panes in the high domed roof. Women lounge on the pool's stairs and ledges, quite used to their own and each other's bodies; this intimacy is simply a regular part of their day. 12.45pm: Exit, pink and squeaky-clean, into bright spring sunshine. I decide to check out Buda's historic Castle District, starting at Mátyás Church, a strange, neo-Gothic creation painted inside like a Pakistani kebab. After gazing across the Danube from the Fisherman's Bastion, a turretted vantage point, I head over to Café Miro for a spot of people-watching.

6.30pm: There's the obligatory gypsy band, but not a dietetic menu in sight at Kárpátia restaurant. I plump for delicious wild boar stew with *galuska* potato dumplings. 8pm: Refined post-prandial entertainment — a chamber music recital — at the art nouveau Zeneakadémia. Sunday 7.30am: Breakfast at the New York coffee house, once the hub of Pest's literary life, now dimly run down. Still worth a visit, though, for the splendid fin-de-siècle decor and glorious pâtisseries. Stoke up the energy levels before heading



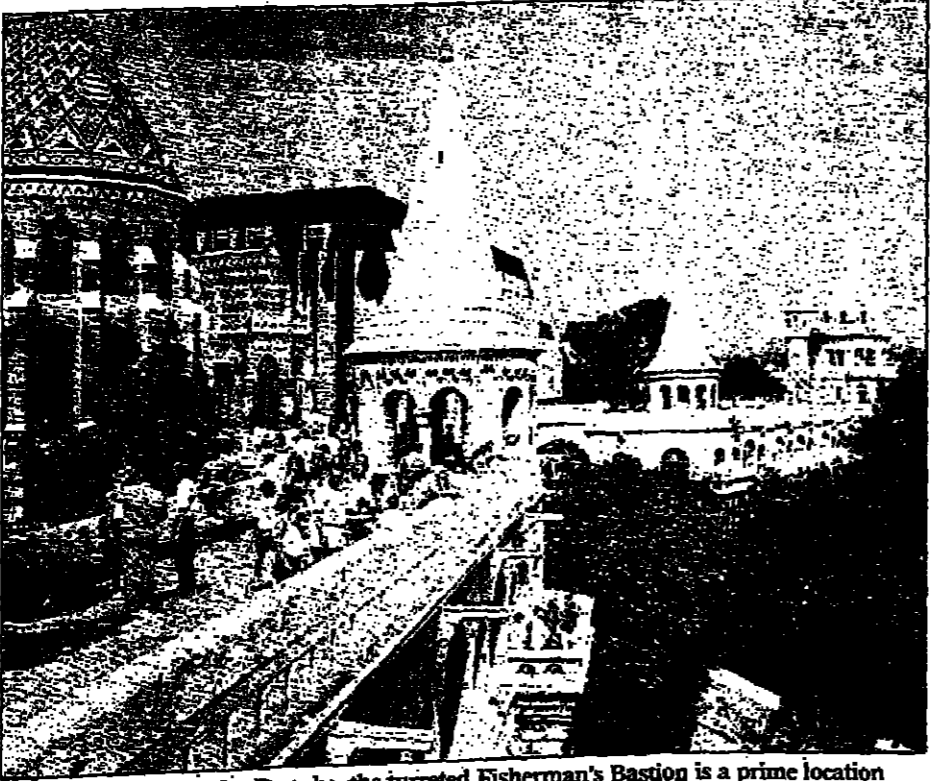
Passing the time with a few games of chess

BUDAPEST FACT FILE

- Getting there: Melissa de Villiers flew to Budapest with Malev Hungarian Airlines and stayed at the Kempinski Hotel Corvinus. Malev (0171-439 0577) has return flights from Heathrow to Budapest from £214.50 in August. Time Off (0990 643633) offers two nights' B&B in a two-star pension-hotel from £264 in August; flights from Heathrow and transfers included.
- Accommodation: The five-star Kempinski Hotel Corvinus (0800 868588) offers double rooms from £140.
- Spa-gazing: Széchenyi Thermal Baths and swimming pool, Allatkerti körút 11. Opening hours: Apr-Sept 6am-7pm daily; Oct-Mar 6am-5pm Mon-Sat, 6am-4pm Sun. Király Thermal Baths, Főutca 84. Opening hours: men 6.30am-7pm Mon, Wed, Fri; women 6.30am-7pm Tues, Thurs, Sat. Gellért Thermal Baths and swimming pool, Kelenhegyi út 4. Opening hours: 6.30am-7pm Mon-Sat; 6.30am-4pm Sun. Entrance fees range from about £1.15-£4; "wet massages" are about £1.60. No need for advance bookings.
- Red tape: visas are not necessary for British or Irish passport holders.
- Further information: Hungarian National Tourist Board (0171-823 1032).
- Reading: *Budapest: The Time Out Guide* (Penguin, £9.99); *Budapest: A Critical Guide* by Anders Torvik (Palace Apheresis, £9.95); *Budapest: A Guide to 20th-Century Architecture* by Edwin Heathcote (Ellipsis Könyvműhely, £5.95).

over the Danube for a final steam at the Gellért, the best-known spa-hotel in Hungary. 8.30am: This is definitely worth the early start. Built in art nouveau style in 1918, the Gellért's lobby alone is extravagantly beautiful, filled with marble pillars and a carved central dome. Today it is also crowded with pensioners, queuing in great clouds of cigarette smoke for their rheumatic and arthritic "cures". There are separate, azuletil steam baths and pools for men and women, and the usual complicated ticketing system, where I am given individual receipts for every stage of the visit, from hiring a changing room cabin to having a massage. Best of all, though, is the Roman colonnaded swimming pool, bright with sunlight filtering through a glass roof. 9.30am: Finally get my massage, although sybaritic it is not: a glum Doc Cotton look-alike in shorts and a straining singlet motions me to lie down, douses me with water and gives me a thorough soaping, punctuating her efforts with pistol-shot slaps. "Big dear! My buggy gets more of a massage than that at the car wash!" I hear a blonde Californian complaining to a friend.

Verdict: With most of Budapest's spas dependent on state subsidies, they hardly rank among the world's most hedonistic. The accent here is on curative treatments; you can spend your entire visit without catching a whiff of aromatherapy oil or even glimpsing a beauty therapist. I had hoped for, smoothing out knots of tension in my back and leaving me feeling both energised and calm. Budapest's spas also offer a tour through history; who needs carrot juice and chemical peels with that on offer?



For views across the Danube, the tormented Fisherman's Bastion is a prime location

THE PYRAMIDS & THE NILE

Thanks to a special flight arrangement with British Airways we are able to offer a direct non-stop wide-bodied Boeing 747 from London Heathrow to Cairo for the Pyramids at Giza 3 nights at the Hotel Mena House including excursion to the Pyramids, Great Sphinx and Egyptian Museum housing the treasures of Tutankhamun, internal flight to Luxor (4-day Nile cruise on board the 5-star MS Serenade, visiting the ancient sites at Assuan, Kom Ombo, Edfu and the Valley of Kings and Queens at Luxor) return via Assuan to Cairo for the Saturday morning British Airways flight to London Heathrow.

8 nights from £595

house, and newly discovered area of Cleopatra finds. Return to the Mena House in the evening by express (train and fly on Saturday morning from Cairo to London Heathrow with British Airways).

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICES

1998 Prices - per person in twin room only

Aug 28 - £595.00, Sept 4, 11, 18, 25 - £625.00

October 1, 8, 15, 22 - £655.00

November 6, 13, 20, 27 - £595.00

December 18, 25 - £595.00

Single Supplement £195.00

Upper deck supplement £85.00

Included: transportation throughout, full board and excursions while on cruise, room and breakfast at the Mena House Hotel, Pyramids excursion, Nile cruise (Mena House Ltd. includes travel insurance, visa processing, no tipping, our current Credit card of Bank, and no request - shall apply to all reservations).

0171-616 1000

VOYAGES JULIES VERPINE

21 Dorset Square, London NW1 6DG

Travel Insurance: LAMATA INTERNATIONAL

Internet: <http://www.vjv.co.uk>

Use of credit card subject to terms and conditions. For personal and professional liability, please refer to our website.

Nile cruise (visiting Assuan, Kom Ombo, Edfu, Luxor and the Valley of the Kings and Queens), Fly Luxor to Cairo for four days at the Mena House, Giza, at the Pyramids, visit the Pyramids, Great Sphinx and Egyptian Museum, visit to Alexandria by express train to see the famous Coriache, the site of Alexander's Light-

MADE TO MEASURE

TRAVEL INSURANCE

COLOSSUS DIRECT

TRAVEL INSURANCE

A-FLIGHT

Travel mood

BUY FLIGHTS

0171 258 0280

0171 616 1000

VOYAGES JULIES VERPINE

21 Dorset Square, London NW1 6DG

Travel Insurance: LAMATA INTERNATIONAL

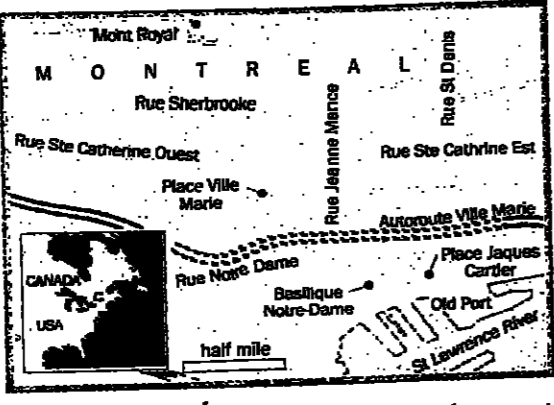
Internet: <http://www.vjv.co.uk>

CANADA QUEBEC

Where cultures collide

York Membery visits Montreal, a bustling metropolis with a colourful past and the world's second largest French-speaking city

THIRTY years ago last month, Charles de Gaulle stood on the steps of Montreal's City Hall and cried: "Vive le Québec libre". Ever since, the separatists have been stirring things up, trying to rid the streets of English language signs, and spurring the flight of English-speaking professionals to other parts of Canada. The last three decades have seen Montreal eclipsed by Toronto and lumbered with an unfair reputation for unfriendliness towards English-speaking tourists.



Garnes but is already looking like an architectural stretcher case — and the Underground City, the subterranean labyrinth of tunnels linking 2,000 stores cocooning Montrealers from the winter which are open all year round.

The British influence has certainly been overshadowed by the French-Canadian flag-waving of recent years. One paradox is that it was only with the conquest of New France in 1760 and the arrival of British, particularly Scottish, migrants that Montreal was transformed from a fur-trading outpost into Canada's premier city, a position it held on to until the 1960s. A second is that it was only when the British arrived that Montreal stopped playing second fiddle to Québec City, as it had under the French regime.

This has all but put Montreal out of bounds as far as most British tourists are concerned — even though it is arguably the most interesting city in Canada. For it's where the story of modern Canada begins, a story that owes as much to the British connection as to the French. Above all, it's a story of two peoples putting aside their differences and building a great city from scratch.

Frequently described as the world's second largest French-speaking city, in reality Montreal is bilingual. About two-thirds of its three million people speak French as their first language and a third English. But you shouldn't need your French phrasebook in the downtown and largely English-speaking, western parts of the city.

Situated on an island in the mighty St Lawrence River, Montreal is dominated by Mont Royal, the mountain — actually more of a hill, but don't ever describe it as such — from which it takes its name. But the best vantage point for your first view of Montreal is the trendy 737 restaurant bar, 46 floors up at Place Ville Marie — a magical place to be as the sun sets and the city lights illuminate the night sky.

everywhere. Unlike their vehemently anti-smoking countrymen, Montrealers show a Gallic disregard for both anti-smoking laws and health risks. There is also a lack of Anglo-Saxon hypocrisy about matters sexual. For instance, as you walk out of Rue St. Catherine, the main downtown shopping drag, you are confronted by Club Supersexe. It's hard to imagine finding such an establishment opposite Harrods.

PERHAPS the best place to start your exploration proper is among the narrow streets of the old city with its cafes, restaurants and bars. This part of Montreal, where Jacques Cartier, the French explorer, set foot in 1535, still has an Old World feel. It's hard to believe you are in North America when you enter the Basilique Notre-Dame, the magnificent neo-Gothic cathedral dating back to the 1820s.

Getting around is easy thanks to the excellent Metro system and while in Montreal, you should make a point of seeing the \$600 million Olympic Stadium — which played host to the 1976

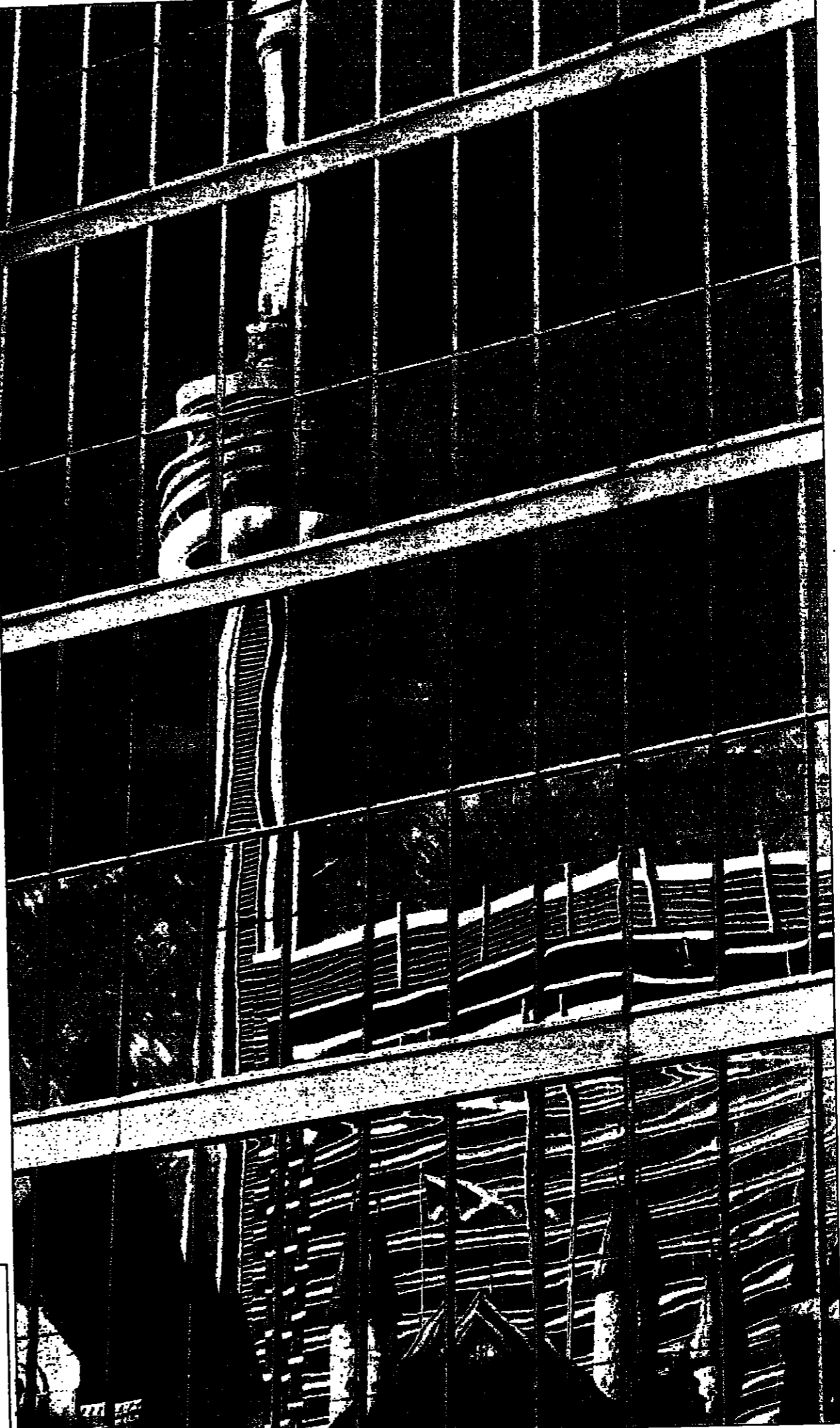
All but a minority of French-speaking separatists seem to realise that it is this clash of Anglo and Francophone cultures that enables both the city-dweller and tourist to enjoy Montreal. Unfortunately, De Gaulle was too busy trying to settle historical scores to appreciate this most salient of facts.

MONTREAL FACT FILE

- York Membery travelled with Bluebird Holidays (0990 320000) which operates charter flights from Gatwick once a week, on Wednesday, to Montreal until the end of October. Return flights in August cost £379; prices drop to £249 from August 21 to September 16. The firm also arranges car and caravan hire, and escorted coach tours (0990 320011). Air Canada (0990 247226); British Airways (0345 222111) and Canadian Airlines (0345 616 767) also fly to Montreal.
- Accommodation: The author stayed at Hotel Complexe Desjardins (001 514 285 1450). During August, a promotion is running, offering a double room for two people for C\$98 (£41), including breakfast.
- When to go: Montreal gets more snow (8 ft) than Moscow, and in January temperatures can plunge to a bone-chilling -20C, so go between mid-April and mid-October. Summer temperatures peak at around 30C. Travelling in autumn offers the chance to see trees in the Laurentian Mountains (100 miles to the north) in all their glory.
- Going out: 737 Restaurant Bar (597 0737) at 1 Place Ville Marie offers impressive views of the city by night. L'Express (645 5333) on Rue St-Denis is recommended for excellent French cuisine.
- Further information: Quebec Tourism (0990 561705).
- Reading: *City Guide Montreal* (Insight, £12.99) is informative and well illustrated. If you're touring it might also be worth investing in *The Rough Guide to Canada* (£12.99), which has a chapter on Montreal.



The Old Town in Montreal



The CN Tower might be Toronto's most conspicuous landmark but the city's real delights are seldom publicised

A P&O autumn cruise

for just £499. Yes, it's a dream. (No, you're not dreaming.)

What finer way to extend your summer than to sail away on a P&O cruise. An equally agreeable incentive is the 15% discount on a selection of autumn cruises, which means you can join us for as little as £499.*

Simply sail south and you'll find the Mediterranean, the Canary Islands or the Caribbean as pleasurable as our ships. Take a look at the table below and dream a little about those blue seas. But really, don't you deserve an autumn cruise to remember, especially now our gently falling prices make it less of a dream, and more of a reality.

	5 nights	Cruise Break
11 October	14 nights	Mediterranean
31 October	18 nights	Mediterranean
14 November	21 nights	Caribbean
27 November	12 nights	Atlantic Islands

See your local ABTA travel agent for details of special offers on our autumn cruises. Whatever kind of cruise you want, you'll find P&O are currently making some great offers.

*Price per adult for inside 4 berth cabin cruise 889 inclusive of discount. We have set aside cabins at selected grades on various autumn cruise holidays which are available for the above discount. Once sold the fare for the grade and cruise will revert to the brochure fare. Not available at every grade on every holiday. Subject to availability.

A legendary trail through the wilds

John Young followed in the footsteps of the French Jesuits on a trip to the Algonquin wilderness

In 1639, with a courage inspired by burning faith, a small group of French Jesuits set off from what is now Québec City westward into the untracked Canadian wilderness. After a journey of some 500 miles by canoe and on foot they arrived on the sandy shores of Georgian Bay where they were confronted by the expanse of Lake Huron stretching into the distance. Here, on the edge of the great freshwater sea, they founded a small mission dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and known thereafter as Sainte-Marie.

About four hours' drive from Toronto, Algonquin is the gateway to the huge expanse of forest, lakes and glacial rock that stretches north to Hudson Bay and west to the edge of the prairies. Three-and-a-half centuries ago, when the Jesuits embarked on their daunting mission, the entire province would have been similarly cloaked; the thousands of square miles that have since been cleared and cultivated are still only a small indentation on the map.

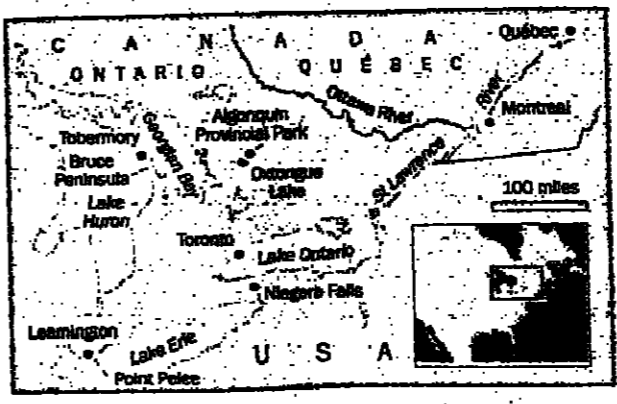
Today the reconstructed village, surrounded by a wooden palisade, is a rare reminder of the earliest days of European settlement in North America, more than a century before Québec itself was captured by the British under General Wolfe. It afforded an agreeable break in our tour of south-eastern Ontario, which had begun two days earlier among the hills and lakes of the Algonquin Provincial Park.



Huron villagers acting out the roles of early settlers

noe, and you carry your own food and accommodation. Visitors — blessed with strength, stamina and a disregard for bears, insects and other hazards can spend a week or more on a canoe journey, humping their craft overland between lakes and rivers, an exhausting process to which the French settlers gave the name portage. Time being strictly limited, canoeing was

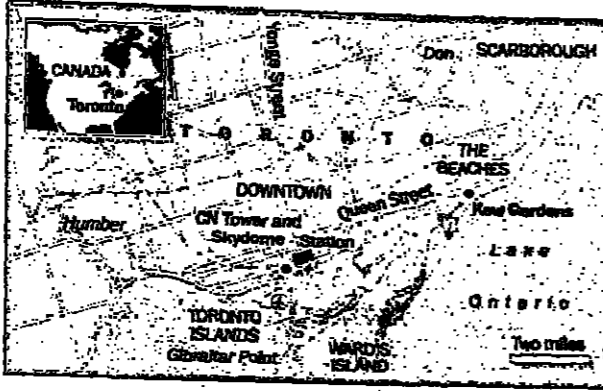
confined to a morning's paddle from Ortonque Lake to where the river spills spectacularly over Ragged Falls. Canoes, paddles, safety helmets, lifejackets and other essentials were provided by Algonquin Outfitters, a sort of backwoods Moss Bros, but even their expertise could do nothing about the blackfly. I knew about blackfly from previous journeys in Canada, but had half-forgotten how persistent and discomfiting they can be. Asked what they feed on when there are no tourists around, my guide replied that they are perfectly happy with a diet of leaves and plants. I would have been more than happy if the seaplane that took us on an aerial sightseeing trip around the park could also have conveyed us on to our next destination, the little town of Tobernory on the northern tip of the Bruce Peninsula. Among the attrac-



Continued on page 25

CANADA: QUEBEC AND ONTARIO

What the guidebooks don't tell you



I am lying on a beach. Above is a cloudless sky; beyond, azure water. It is hotter than a Sicilian oven. Dark-skinned girls in bikinis play Frisbee with tanned men in wraparound shades. All around me I hear Spanish, Italian, Greek. I close my eyes and I am in the Mediterranean. I open them again and there is the CN Tower reminding me that the beach I am lying on is by Lake Ontario in Toronto, Canada's largest city. Toronto is a surprising city. Not for its obvious landmarks — the CN Tower and Skydome — but for its hidden quarters. Like Paris, London and New York, what makes it is what the tourist brochures...

Parlour and join the queue of five-year-olds for a cone. You can choose to be good, you know, Mary-Jane, barks a despairing mother, but Mary-Jane has chosen otherwise, smearing chocolate ice cream across her face like war paint. All around me people are wearing shorts, Birkenstock sandals, colourful shirts; it feels more West Coast than southern Ontario. I take my vanilla special and stroll along Queen Street admiring the funky shops and eateries; the 24-hour Sunset Grill where all-day breakfast costs \$1.70, the Roastery Coffee where old men sit warming their faces like iguanas, and the health-food shops offering roots, powders and "karma cookies". "Sorry no Rollerbladers" says a sign on the IGA supermarket, the only note of stress in a sea of relaxation and good humour. The heart of The Beaches is Kew Gardens. It was here in 1853 that British soldier Joseph Williams built a log cabin by the lake. He called it Kew Farms after his native district in London. By 1879 he had acquired a further 25 more acres which he called "The Canadian Kew Gardens". People crammed the new Queen Street trams to enjoy the park and The Beaches' reputation for pastoral tranquility was born.

From the islands, Toronto is mysterious, like a mirage

Arming myself with a map and a bookshelf of novels, I set off in search of unknown Toronto. In *Fugitive Pieces*, Michaels compares Toronto to Athens: "a city where almost everyone has come from some where else — a market, a caravaner". I discover this for myself on the 501 streetcar heading east along Queen Street — the oldest tramway route in the city, first opened in 1875 by the lyrically named Toronto Gravel Road and Concrete Company. Alongside me a couple speak Russian. Others chat in Italian, Spanish and a strange garble that might be Japanese or a dialect of Eskimo. We are heading to a district known as The Beaches, 20 minutes by tram east of downtown; an area of Victorian houses, parks and lakeside beaches — the setting for Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion*. Here there is sand, the oldest boardwalk in North America and ice-cream. I descend the streetcar at Licks Ice-Cream...

Kew Gardens today is full of children. The Beaches are where downtown couples move to breed. There are babies everywhere, many in plastic carts pulled by long plastic handles that look like market barrows from which parents seem to be trying to sell their infants. I follow one such cart along the path to the lakeshore boardwalk where babies give way to babes. The boardwalk along the sands of Lake Ontario is Toronto's premier pramming spot. Running for several miles along white sands, it is North America's oldest surviving wooden walkway (according to locals), dating from the 1850s. I join the throngs promenading, fervent Rollerbladers, gangs of teenagers looking for cigarettes and love, families with cart-fuls of babies — and dogs, which seem to come in two sizes, very small and very large. Chihuahuas skitter along the boardwalk like four-legged pigeons, while deerhounds the size of Red Rum gallop across the sands. I know they are deerhounds because their owner has just shouted out: "The deerhounds have to take a dump!" At the eastern end of Scarborough Beach, the crowds thin and the boardwalk disappears into the sands. It was here in 1907 that Scarborough Beach Park began offering 100 attractions including "Shoot the Chutes", "Bump the Bumps" and "Tunnel of Love". It is no wonder that local Presbyterians protested. The protests were as much about the exclusivity of The Beaches as about the sinital "bump the bumps" — local residents have always been fiercely independent of Toronto. Such separatism split over into fascism in 1933 when local men formed "Swastika Clubs" to oust the local immigrant communities. Thankfully, however, Toronto has always been wary of prejudice and gangs of Italians joined Jewish youths to fight these prospective Nazis, leaving many Swastika Club men in hospital. As the sun sets I sit eating more ice-cream by the Leury...

Seduced by the novels of Atwood, Michaels and Ondaatje, Jim Keeble soaks up the easy, laid-back atmosphere of Toronto, Canada's largest city and home to almost every nationality in the world



The Toronto Islands lie a mile offshore from the city. They were connected by a sandbar until 140 years ago

America's oldest surviving wooden walkway (according to locals), dating from the 1850s. I join the throngs promenading, fervent Rollerbladers, gangs of teenagers looking for cigarettes and love, families with cart-fuls of babies — and dogs, which seem to come in two sizes, very small and very large. Chihuahuas skitter along the boardwalk like four-legged pigeons, while deerhounds the size of Red Rum gallop across the sands. I know they are deerhounds because their owner has just shouted out: "The deerhounds have to take a dump!" At the eastern end of Scarborough Beach, the crowds thin and the boardwalk disappears into the sands. It was here in 1907 that Scarborough Beach Park began offering 100 attractions including "Shoot the Chutes", "Bump the Bumps" and "Tunnel of Love". It is no wonder that local Presbyterians protested. The protests were as much about the exclusivity of The Beaches as about the sinital "bump the bumps" — local residents have always been fiercely independent of Toronto. Such separatism split over into fascism in 1933 when local men formed "Swastika Clubs" to oust the local immigrant communities. Thankfully, however, Toronto has always been wary of prejudice and gangs of Italians joined Jewish youths to fight these prospective Nazis, leaving many Swastika Club men in hospital. As the sun sets I sit eating more ice-cream by the Leury...



Strollers on the oldest boardwalk in North America

Lifesaving Station, a wooden hut on Kew Beach that seems to have been directly transported from Cape Cod. Built in 1920 it is now a national monument, a fact which does not seem to prevent children climbing all over it. I lie back in the sand and imagine myself in an Ondaatje novel, awaiting the arrival of a half-

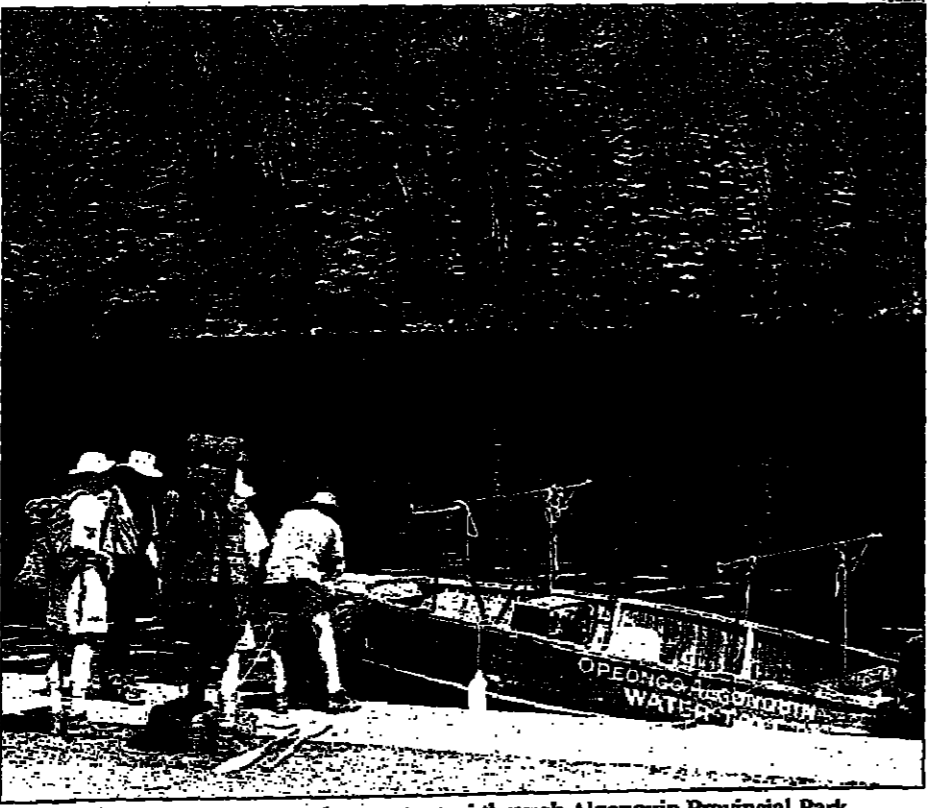
crazed lover. She does not arrive, unfortunately, and I catch the 501 tram back to the concrete of downtown. The following morning I head once more to the lake to take a trip to the Toronto Islands. These are seen by almost every tourist in Toronto from the top of the CN Tower, but are visited by few. Lying just a mile offshore, they were once a sandbar connected to Toronto until a violent storm in 1858 severed them for ever. The original inhabitants of the Islands were Mississauga Indians who in 1787 were persuaded by the British to sell 250,800 acres of their land for ten shillings. If that sounds like a bad deal for the Indians, it was. Today there are 650 people living there — a community of artists, writers and ferry-boat commuters who work in the downtown office blocks. I am heading across the water because of Atwood. In *The Robber Bride* one of her characters, Charis, lives in an Island house and Atwood's description of the surroundings is seductive, "infused with a violent, brooding humid life, it makes her feel that everything — even the water, even the stones — is alive and aware...

and her along with it". It takes a few hours to walk round the Islands, over inter-connecting bridges. I begin with the most inhabited, Ward's Island, and stop at the Lakeshore Bed and Breakfast, whose owner, Miriam McFarlane, moved from "the mainland" five years ago. She prefers the Island mentality: "There's a community feel. You can have the president of IBM living next to a truck driver and everyone gets along". She does not even mind the summer tourists: "Hey, it's Toronto's playground". Toronto has always come to play on the Islands, ever since Governor Simcoe's wife Elizabeth declared them her "favourite sands" in 1793. By 1927, a guidebook said they attracted "the frivolous young man in search of pleasure, and the giddy young things who admire acrobatic exercises". Being a fairly frivolous young man myself, I continue onwards in search of "giddy young things" to the white sand beaches, where the lake-water is as blue as sapphire, or at least an expensive trinity-gel toothpaste. In the distance Toronto shimmers like a strange mirage. As Atwood writes in *The Robber Bride*: "From here on the Islands, the city is mysterious, like a mirage, like the cover of a book of science fiction. A paperback." At lunchtime I stop at the Rectory, a community-run cafe. I cough as I order and the server declares: "You need not lemonade." As I sip my remedy in the sun, I decide Miriam's right. It is people-orientated, this place. The main summer attraction is Centerville, an old-time amusement park complete with Main Street, fire-house, rickety roller-coaster and "Far Enough Farm", so-named because the owner overheard a mother telling her children they had all walked "far enough" to get there. At the western end of the Islands I reach Gibraltar Point, one of Toronto's most historic sites and the reason for the colour of the American White House. In the 1813 war, American frigates destroyed a guard post here. In retaliation, the British fleet sailed up the Potomac and burnt Washington DC, scorning President Madison's residence so that it had to be white-washed — thus creating the White House.



Ethnic flavours spice up Toronto marketplaces

TORONTO FACT FILE
■ Jim Keeble flew to Toronto with British Airways (0345 222111), which has a World Offer to Toronto. Tickets purchased by August 5 for flights between September 8 and September 30 cost £395 midweek, £425 at weekends. Otherwise, return Apex fares until September 30 cost £604 midweek, £634 weekend. Flights are from Heathrow and Birmingham.
■ Where to stay: Jim Keeble stayed at the Metropolitan Hotel, 105 Chestnut St, Toronto M5G 1R3 (001 416 977 5000) <http://www.metropolitan.com>, which has double rooms from £72. Ward's Island B&B (203 0935) has doubles from £24 a night.
■ Red tape: British citizens do not require a visa but must have proof of adequate funds, medical insurance and valid passport.
■ Getting around: Ferries to the islands every 30 minutes from Island Ferry Docks, Queen's Quay (922 8193), return fare £1.70.
■ Eating out: Happening bar scene at the Beach Bar, 1962A Queen St E (362 5425); excellent all-day breakfast at the Sunset Grill, 2006 Queen St E (690 9955); The Rectory Cafe, 102 Lakeshore Avenue, Ward's Island (203 6011), open Friday, Saturday, Sunday 10-4pm.
■ Reading: *In the Skin of a Lion* by Michael Ondaatje (Picador, £6.99); *Explorer Canada* by Tim Jepson (AA Guides, £14.99).
■ Further Information: Canadian High Commission (0177 258 8600), Macdonald House, 1 Grosvenor Square, London W1X 0AB; Visit Canada Centre (0891 75000 — 50p per minute).



Backpackers ready to take a water taxi through Algonquin Provincial Park

Continued from page 24
tions is a voyage through the islands in a glass-bottomed boat, stopping to inspect the submerged wrecks of some of the dozens of ships that have come to grief on the rocks. More demanding was a three hour ride on horseback to where the Niagara Escarpment, a great limestone ridge running north from Lake Erie to Lake Huron, ends in a line of strangely beautiful cliffs that climb from the beach and overhang the clear blue water in a series of flat terraces. The flora, which includes more than 60 species of orchids and ferns, is a botanical treasure house. From Tobermory to Leamington, in the far southwest of Ontario close to the American border, proved to be another uncomfortably long journey, but my arrival coincided with a gala dinner to mark the climax of the local wine festival. Canadian wine used to be a bad joke, but the planting of new vineyards combined with modern technology have effected a transformation, and much of it is highly acceptable. As more and more bottles were brought to the tables, the mood became increasingly hilarious, interspersed by bulletins on the progress of the evening's baseball (or was it ice hockey?) match being held in Detroit, a few miles away across the river. Despite the abundance of English place names, this is probably the most Americanised part of Canada, and I was presented with glossy brochures and invitations to the newly opened Las Vegas-style casino in the city of Windsor, a development which in traditionally puritanical Ontario would have been unthinkable a generation ago. Leamington, or Leamington as the locals pronounce it, calls itself the tomato capital of the world, backing its claim with a large downtown statue of a tomato and a huge ketchup factory. A more enticing prospect on the last morning was Point Pelee, a little peninsula of marsh, deciduous woodland and sandy beaches which is the southernmost point of mainland Canada — on the same latitude as Rome — which I explored by canoe and bicycle. Point Pelee was first declared a reserve by the British, who valued its oaks and white pines for shipbuilding. Nowadays it is also the autumn assembly point for millions of scarlet and black Monarch butterflies at the start of their remarkable annual migration to the Sierra Madre mountains of Mexico.

ONTARIO FACT FILE
■ John Young travelled with Air Canada and Ontario Tourism.
■ Air Canada (0900 247226) operates up to four flights daily from Heathrow to Toronto. Fares currently start at £578 plus £26.60 tax for midweek flights, booked 21 days in advance. The airline also has daily, non-stop flights from Manchester and Glasgow at the same price.
■ All Canada Holidays (01502 985828) offers a 12-day self-drive holiday to Ontario's national and provincial parks, including return flights. It offers accommodation (two nights inclusive of meals) and car hire, for £1,248.50 per person until September.
■ Other operators featuring Ontario include Canadian Connections (01494 473273), North American Highways (01902 851138) and Travelpack (0161-707 4405).
■ Further information: Postal inquiries: Ontario Tourism, PO Box 157, Morden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 9XL. Visit Canada (0891 75000).

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997.
Source: Pulp & Paper Information Centre

Canada
Quality Escorted Tours
Autumn is the perfect time to explore glorious Canada, on our two most popular tours.
'BEST OF CANADA - EAST TO WEST'
15 days from only £1,299
• Enjoy Toronto and the spectacular Niagara Falls • Ottawa and Montreal • Escorted flight from Montreal to Calgary • Majestic Rockies scenery in Banff National Park, Lake Louise and Jasper • Across the Rockies in Kamloops • Vancouver • 2 nights in Vancouver
Prime departure dates: 1st, 8th, 20th & 28th September, 1st & 8th October 1998
'GLORIOUS CANADIAN ROCKIES'
14 days from only £1,299
• 3 days in magical Vancouver • The beauty of the Okanagan Valley • 2 nights in each of Canada's most famous National Parks - Banff and Jasper • Through the Rockies in Kamloops & Sun Peaks • Ferry to Vancouver Island, for 2 nights in Victoria
Prime departure dates: 21st August, 27th September, 1st October 1998
All Jetsete Tours include:
• Return air ticket (British Airways) • Experienced Airline Tour Director from start to finish • First class, air-conditioned coaches • Fine quality hotels at prime locations
BOOK NOW TO SECURE THESE FINAL PLACES
To book these or other tours, call us now on 012943 957711 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 11am-4pm). For a FREE brochure, call our 24-hour Brochure-Line on 01295 834324, and please state to which you require: our 1001 or 1101 brochure.

travelsphere holidays
A great deal to look at!
from only **£895!**
Join us on this exceptional value 10 day FULLY-ESCORTED tour of **CHINA**
You'll see PEKING, THE GREAT WALL, CHENGDE, XIAN & the TERRACOTTA ARMY and so much more
ALL MEALS, ALL SIGHTSEEING & ALL EXCURSIONS INCLUDED
Travelsphere is the leading UK operator of escorted tours to China. We are delighted to hold the price of this highly successful tour for a third year! The value is truly exceptional with all meals and all sightseeing included in the price.
China remains one of the world's few genuine travel experiences. It's a vast and mysterious land with Peking at its heart. See Tian An Men Square, the Forbidden City and Imperial Palace. Walk along the Great Wall and marvel at the Ming Tombs. Observe the traditional way of life in the markets of the old regal resort of Chengde. Fly to the ancient city of Xian to see the incredible Terracotta Army. This well proven tour includes it all and so much more.
FREE 350 PAGE GUIDE BOOK...
with every booking form. The superb Odyssey Guide (retail value £12.95) is lavishly illustrated and packed with information to prepare you for this fascinating tour.
Also 15 day tours from only £1195, including Nanjing and Shanghai.
Fascinating add-on visits to the Yangtze Gorges, South China, Hong Kong and Hainan Ice Festival. See brochure.
Regional Rights and exclusive local coach departures on selected dates: see brochure
OR POST COUPON
Please send me the colour brochure on your fabulous 10 day fully-escorted tour to China
NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
POST CODE _____
FOR BROCHURE PHONE **0800 19 14 18**
Please Quote Ref. TT31ACX8/99
Offices are open: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm Sat 10am-4pm Sun 11am-5pm
Fully AATA Accredited for member
A Name You Can Rely On

Kuala Lumpur moves up to first division

The Commonwealth Games in KL next month are seen locally as a giant step towards Malaysia's claim to be a world class player, says John Brunton

When I first arrived in Kuala Lumpur back in the early 1980s, the Malaysian capital was the ideal place in southeast Asia to live. There was hardly any traffic or pollution, plenty of delightful colonial architecture, while high-rise buildings were more or less confined to a tiny part of the centre, quaintly known as The Golden Triangle. It was a relaxed, fun place, and everywhere you looked there was greenery: lush tropical gardens, and jungle intruding into the edges of the city. What all this meant was that KL, as everyone here calls it, was essentially a second-division city: the region's serious business went on in high-tech metropolitan centres such as Hong Kong, Singapore or even bustling Bangkok.

So much for nostalgic memories. I returned earlier this year, picked up a hire car from the airport, and promptly got lost in a maze of criss-cross motorways, bypasses and new suburbs. KL, which hosts the Commonwealth Games next month, is now an architect's nirvana, dominated by a gleaming glass and metal skyline of state-of-the-art skyscrapers, topped off, like a wedding cake, by the 88-storey Kuala Lumpur City Centre, whose twin towers stand as the world's tallest building. Commuters zoom around on an elevated monorail system that could have come straight from a science fiction book.

And, under the watchful eye of Microsoft's Bill Gates, the Government is creating a huge Multimedia Super Corridor, a Malaysian Silicon Valley, on the outskirts of KL. This will include a self-contained, eco-friendly "Intelli-

CITIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

gent City", with each house electronically linked, telemedicine (doctors available by video link) and smart schools (desks with computer terminals). Known as Cyberjaya, the whole thing may sound like a virtual-reality computer game, but Britain's Millennium Dome looks like a playground toy in comparison. It quickly becomes clear that Malaysians have a need to be recognised by the outside world, a kind of Guinness Book of Records mentality, endlessly seeking the world's tallest, longest, largest whatever.

"We need to discard our old colonial mentality and be proud," explained Edmund Ser, one of KL's leading fashion designers. "Building Kuala Lumpur up into one of the great new cities is just part of that process, making us one of the more important nations by the start of the next century."

At the moment, what Malaysians are most proud of is not a record-breaking skyscraper or a multi-billion dollar new airport, but the fact that KL has been chosen as the first Asian host of the Commonwealth Games. Right now it's impossible to escape colourful bunting, posters, stickers, songs featuring "Wira" (warrior), the grinning orangutan mascot for the games.

From KL's mayor down to taxi drivers and roadside stall

holders, everyone is excited about hosting the games. For them, this is another giant step towards Malaysia being recognised as a lead player on the world stage.

And I found out, when Malaysian friends quickly told me to shut up, that the one word never to utter is the dreaded "haze" because the whole population is on tenterhooks in case the enveloping smog returns to threaten the games. Rumours that Australia was ready to step in as a replacement venue if the haze wafted back were treated as nothing less than a neo-colonialist plot. At the moment, thank goodness, the weather forecasts are good.

Not everything is perfect, however. KL's rapid growth during the past few years has meant it has been in danger of overstretching itself — particularly since the financial meltdown that has gripped Asia. Several ambitious construction projects have been put on hold (for example, the planned high-speed rail-link between its recently-opened international airport and the city centre), and its horrendous traffic jams resemble a Jacques Tati film set in a sauna.

Nevertheless, Malaysia is surviving these sorts of problems far better than its southeast Asian neighbours, who have felt the effect of the region's recent financial collapse more keenly. It is used to being put down by the Western media, especially whenever its feisty Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, makes one of his controversial speeches. But this underdog image has strengthened the people's faith in their country and their determination to succeed.

Although I visited just as the currency plummeted in value, everyone was ready to buckle down and get on with business. Bars, shopping centres and restaurants were still booming. Sitting in the packed lounge of his trendy bar, The Long Island Iced Tea House, resident British expatriate Jeffrey Rowland told me: "I've lived most of my life in Asia — my parents are still in Hong Kong — but for the last four years I've chosen to be based in Kuala Lumpur. It's the city for the future if you're talking



The colonial-style Sultan Abdul Samad building (the High Court) in the foreground with a skyscraper as a backdrop. Such vistas epitomise the city



Typical cusped arches in one of the city's many mosques



Recharge your batteries without shocking your bank manager

There's never been a better excuse to get away and chill out with the Virgin Hotel Collection. For a limited period, a selection of our hotels are offering reduced rates, so you can spoil yourself without spoiling your bank balance. Every hotel has at least one AA Rosette for good food so you'll be glad to know these special rates include dinner each night. With most hotels situated in gorgeous countryside locations, where better to relax and recharge?

ENGLAND	
Brockmans Hall, or Elmham, Worcester	£70
Boston Park Hotel, Bedford, East Sussex	£70
Carlson Hill Hotel, Crayke, North Yorkshire	£70
Malay's Hotel & Restaurant, Leeds	£55
Mickleover Court Hotel, or Alban Towers, Derby	£54
The Parnham Country House Hotel, Epsom, West	£49.50
Woodfield House Hotel, The New Forest, Hampshire	£75
Wadding Park House & Hotel, Harrogate, North Yorkshire	£55
WALES	
Coed-y-Nant Hotel, Vale of Glamorgan, South Wales	£65
Cort Maerdy Hotel, Welsh Borders (Monmouthshire)	£55
Salmon House Hotel, Somerset	£65
SCOTLAND	
North House Hotel, Edinburgh	£60
IRELAND	
Finstown Country House Hotel, or Dublin	£64

Prices from £49.50. Call us now on: 0800 716 919



The rates above are per person, per night and include bottle of wine, dinner, bed and a full cooked breakfast. They apply when two adults share a standard double or twin room for two consecutive nights.

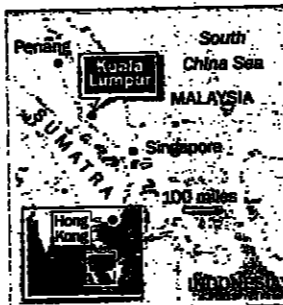
These offers cannot be combined with other discounts, offers or promotions. The rates are available on a limited number of rooms and include VAT and service. Breakfast can be taken mid-week and at weekends but are subject to availability.

about Asia. It reminds me of Hong Kong 20 years ago. There's an immense energy bubbling beneath the surface, waiting to explode.

Most tourists treat KL as a one-day stop-off, before heading to Malaysia's beach resorts or embarking on adventure jungle trips. That's a shame, though, because KL is a great place to hang out for a few days. Part of the attraction is that it is a split-personality city, with colonial outposts squeezed between skyscrapers, vast shopping malls packed with basement-priced designer labels (shopping is unbelievably cheap for westerners since the collapse of the currency) and funky art galleries or decor stores hidden away in renovated Thirties bungalows. There are steamy street markets selling exotic Asian food, or designer restaurants serving expensive nouvelle cuisine. There are so many bars and clubs that you'd need to be out every night for a month to see them all.

The best place to start to get a feel for KL is the old colonial heart of the city, centred on the spot where the first "antap" houses were put up at the confluence of two rivers, the Klang and Gombak. In Malay, "Kuala Lumpur" translates as "muddy estuary". Less than a century ago, this was a jungle outpost of tin miners, gambling joints and rampant malaria: a cowboy town similar to any in the Klondike during the Gold Rush.

The first really solid building to go up was the government offices, known then as the Federal Secretariat. Designed by the British in what was termed Mahometan Style, complete with cupolas and domes. It looks like something out of *The Arabian Nights*. It stands today unchanged, albeit against a backdrop of high-rise buildings. Opposite is the green lawn of the Padang, where cricket is still played on Sundays, and the black and white, mock-Tudor architecture of the Royal Selangor Club — The Spotted Dog — another throwback to British colonial days. Nearby, the old fruit and vegetable market has also avoided the demolition bulldozer, and was instead transformed into the immensely successful Central Market, a Malaysian version of Covent Garden. The man responsible for this heritage conservation is Tunku Abdullah, brother of the present King of Malaysia. He has gone from being the Malay Officer for Kuala Lumpur under the British administration in the Fifties, to



being one of the founders of the modern city. "I would have loved to have preserved more of old Kuala Lumpur," he said, "but you can't stop progress — the tremendous movement that is making this place one of the great cities in Asia, rather than some charming, sleepy backwater."

Before exploring modern KL, take a break from the sweating, humid heat for a drink at one of three irresistible "old KL" spots in the city centre. Carcosa was a grand colonial mansion built on a hill overlooking the city for the first British Resident, Sir Frank Swettenham. When I used to live nearby, the house was still the official residence of the British High Commissioner, whose son I knew. We used to sneak into the hallowed snooker room for a game while his



This year's big event

parents were out, I could not understand why the table was lower than normal until I learned that occupying Japanese requisitioned the house during the Second World War and, being somewhat smaller than the typical British diplomat, they simply sawed off the table's legs.

Perfectly preserved today as the luxurious Carcosa Seri Negara Hotel (the snooker table has sadly disappeared), it is now where the city's movers and shakers gather for a calm



The old-fashioned face of the city: a motorcycle street vendor selling snacks

afternoon tea, complete with cucumber sandwiches.

Another "old spot" is Le Coq d'Or, a vast Victorian villa with imposing Greek-Roman pillars which is now a restaurant: a perfect spot to relax on a cool veranda in a rattan armchair under a whirring ceiling fan, and enjoy a refreshing gin and lime. And then there's the Coliseum Café, an old planters' haunt that opened in 1921: a great place to sink an ice-cold Tiger beer.

In mid-afternoon (not later, because peak-hour traffic jams are horrendous), grab a cab for Bangsar, a quarter of an hour out of the centre. When I lived here, Bangsar was just a few nondescript Chinese and Indian shops. Now it is KL's Notting Hill Gate and Soho rolled into one.

Streets are lined with chic cafés, pubs and late night cocktail and grappa bars. You'll discover smart contemporary art galleries, fabulous interior design boutiques, and local fashion designer showrooms. Café terraces spill over the pavement in the early evening, as the town's rich, young and beautiful crowd roll up in their BMWs and Mercedes. Choose between a classic Chinese meal of chilli crabs, drunken prawns and stizzling venison at an open-air stall, or settle down for a gourmet meal of fusion cuisine at a hip bistro.

Make the effort to spend a few days in KL, and you'll discover a different, eclectic metropolis: a city for the future but also one that has not forgotten its past. And for once, the conservation of heritage is to improve the quality of life for the city's inhabitants, not a public relations exercise to attract tourists.

KUALA LUMPUR FACT FILE

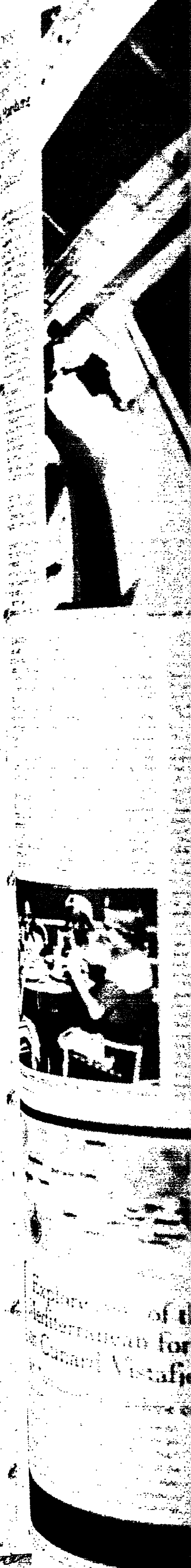
- Getting there: World Dreams (01483 730904) has five-night room-only at a four-star hotel in Kuala Lumpur from £784. TravelDirect (0171-938 3366) has return flights from Heathrow to Kuala Lumpur from £411 in August and £378 in September. Getting to the Commonwealth Games: Sportsworld Travel (01235 554844) offers packages to the Commonwealth Games (September 11-21). Six nights' B&B at a four-star hotel in Kuala Lumpur is from £1,295 during the Games; flights from Heathrow, transfers and a ticket to either the opening or closing ceremony included (tickets for other events cost £3-£40).
- Red tape: No visa needed, but you must have a passport valid for a minimum of six months.
- Where to stay: The Regent (0060 3 241 8000), classic upmarket hotel, outstanding service. Double rooms from £68.2 a night, breakfast included. Carcosa Seri Negara (264 8000), a wonderful colonial mansion, now an Aman Resort. Double rooms from £68.96. Concorde Kuala Lumpur (244 2200), fun and funky hotel, with Hard Rock Café. Double rooms from £31.99. The Lodge (242 0122), an economy hotel with a swimming pool. Double rooms from £17.24. All prices are rack rates.
- Eating and drinking: head for The Coliseum Café, Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman; Le Coq d'Or, Jalan Ampang. Also check out a hip new area called Ceylon Hill (formerly a seedy red light district, but now seriously trendy): great cocktails at Long Island Iced Tea House (15 Changkat Bukit Bintang); cigars and Cuban meals at Havana (2 Lorong Sakabati); pizzas and spaghetti at Le Maschere (16 Changkat Bukit Bintang); a fun French wine bar is Breich, 27, Jalan Mesini. In the centre: Citrus (9 Jalan Sultan Ismail) is worth a visit for the food and decor as is Heeren Hall (7 Jalan Delima).
- Shopping: best of the malls are Lot 10 (Jalan Sultan Ismail), Star Hill, Jalan Bukit Bintang; The Mall, Jalan Putra; Sungei Wang Complex, Jalan Sultan Ismail.
- Reading: *Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei* (Rough Guide, £11.99), *Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei* (Lonely Planet, £11.99), *Old Kuala Lumpur* by J. M. Gullick (Penerbit Pajar Vakti, £10.99).
- Further information: Tourism Malaysia (0171-950 7432). Website: <http://www.malaysia.org.uk>

You're only really covered with

WORLD COVER

ANNUAL TRAVEL INSURANCE

The new



The new wave of child cruises

As Disney launches its first cruise ship, Maria Harding asks what its rivals offer your children

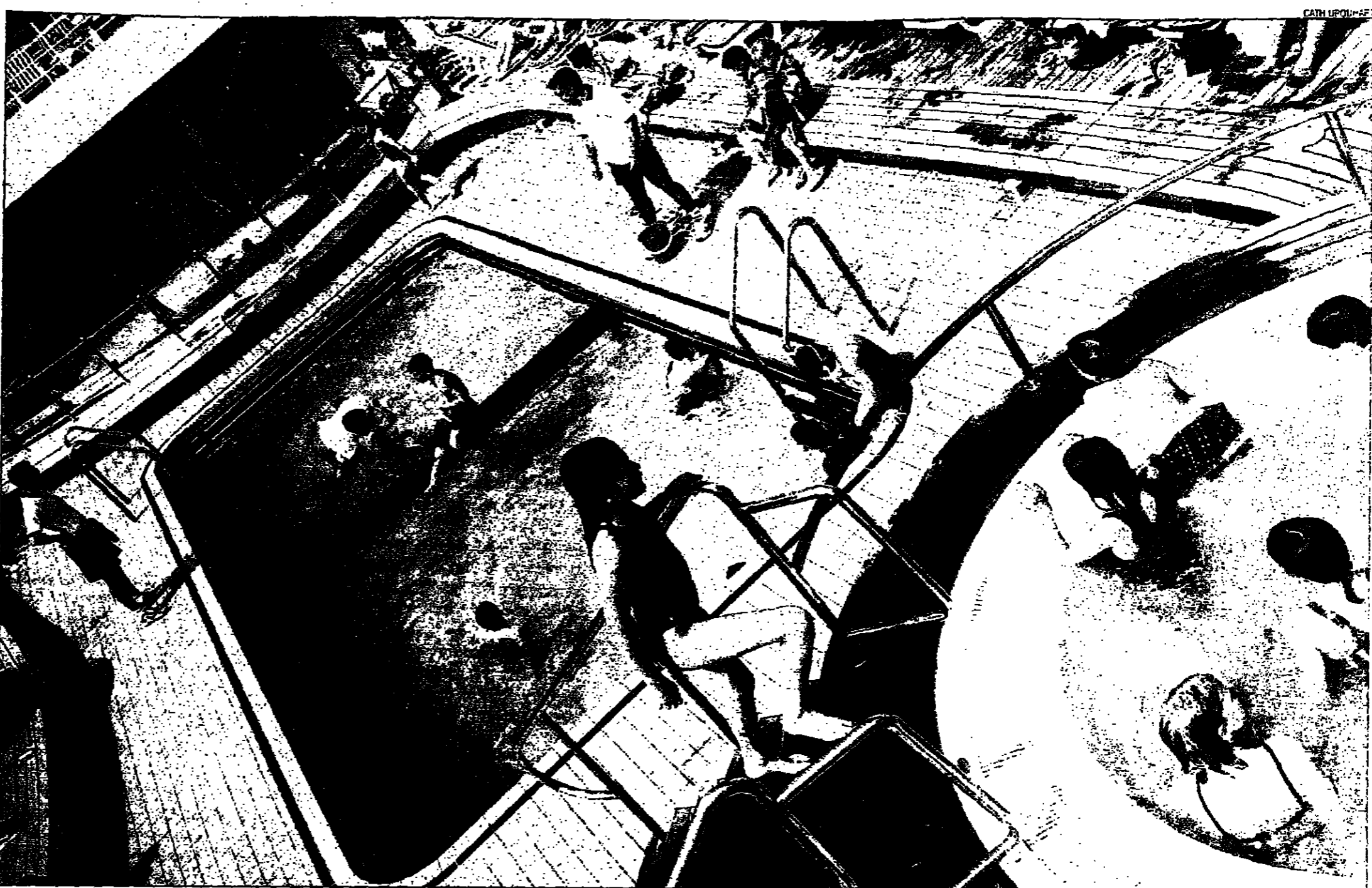
Cruising was once associated more with people in their second childhood than their first. But that was before the cruise ship building boom of the 1980s and 1990s brought a proliferation of "floating resorts" — giant, ultra-modern ships boasting ever-more-grandiose amenities.

Increasingly, these have come to include everything a child could dream of, as cruise lines have vied to attract affluent married-with-kids baby-boomers and win the hearts of tomorrow's holidaymakers.

Teen discos, computer games arcades, indoor and outdoor play centres, children-only swimming pools and supervised activity programmes are now *de rigueur* on all new-generation mass-market ships. Even older vessels operated by Thomson and Airtours offer children's clubs and playrooms, mainly during school holidays.

Disney Magic has kids' pools, teenagers' common rooms and a cartoon painting-themed restaurant (see separate story).

A useful side-effect of all this kiddie-courting is that couples averse to the company of riotous youngsters will find that, on many cruises, children are neither seen nor heard — usually because they're too busy enjoying themselves in their own areas.



All good clean fun: children get the chance to splash out on board *Oriana*. As well as a whirlpool bath to lounge in, they can enjoy a (supervised) pillow fight while walking a plank across the swimming pool

BEST OF THE BIGGIES
Carnival Cruise Line (0171-729 1929) became the world's biggest cruise company by providing gigantic, kitsch "fun ships" for big kids who like to party round the clock.

Its 13 ships now attract about 175,000 real youngsters every year — and keep them happy with their own pools and deck areas, playrooms, video arcades and teen discos, as well as a "Camp" Carnival activity programme split into different age groups.

Carnival's newest ship, the 2,040-passenger *Elation* (launched this year), shows the company's determination not to be denied by Disney: it has a 2,500sq ft "Children's World" comprising a computer lab, an arts and crafts centre and an

adventure/activity area. There is also a sailing-ship-themed outdoor play centre, a virtual reality game arcade, and "Meet the Stars" backstage tours for youngsters who want to be cruise entertainers when they grow up.

Norwegian Cruise Line (0800 181 560) has "Circus at Sea" classes teaching children juggling, clowning and other circus skills and there's an end-of-cruise performance for proud parents. The circus is part of the company's Kids' Crew programme, which, like most of the big ship children's entertainment, is divided into four age groups and backed up with kids' menus, free ice-cream and daily newsletters.

Royal Caribbean International, or RCI (01932 820230),

is Carnival's biggest rival and its ultra-modern ships have indoor and outdoor children's facilities, plus an age group-related Adventure Ocean Youth Programme with painting, races, swimming, puppet making and kite-flying.

Next year, RCI launches the first of its record-breaking 136,000-ton Project Eagle ships, *Voyager of the Seas*, which it claims will feature "the largest youth facilities of any ship afloat or under construction". There are few details as yet, but these 3,840-passenger behemoths will have rock-climbing walls and ice rinks on board.

Princess Cruises (0171-800 2468), a division of P&O, aims to keep four of its ten ships (the *Royal Sky*, *Island* and *Pacific Princesses*) virtually child-free outside school holiday periods by offering very limited kids' facilities. But its latest-generation "grand class" ships — the 77,000-ton *Sun*, *Dawn* and *Sea Princesses* and the brand new 109,000-ton *Grand Princess* — offer youth programmes year-round.

Activities, including pool games, on-board mini-Olympics, "Coke-ball" parties and talent contests, are divided into two age groups, two-12 years and 13-17 years. And the latest addition to the line's child facilities aboard *Grand Princess* is a high-tech virtual reality ride which simulates underwater dives, motor racing and other adventures.



A drawing class with, surprise, surprise, a ship as model

Holland America Line's Alaska cruises give youngsters aged six and over the chance to enjoy real adventures on special shore excursions; options include hikes and treasure hunts for six to 12 year olds, and sea kayaking for teenagers.

Celebrity Cruises' facilities include American-style Slumber Parties — an unusual variation on the babysitting services offered by the other lines. Both Celebrity Cruises (0171-355 0606) and Holland America Line (0171-613 3300) concentrate child activities mainly during the school holidays, when they offer supervised clubs and special menus.

PROS AND CONS
The big ships are the best bet for glossy, state-of-the-art children's facilities, usually staffed by enthusiastic, fresh-faced young Americans.

The downside? They're expensive; expect to pay upwards of £1,000 per adult for a cruise with any of these lines, though most do cut-price offers for children aged four-17 (discounts can be substantial).

OTHER OPTIONS
P&O Cruises (0171-800 2222) has imaginative children's facilities aboard its newest ships, *Oriana* and *Auradia*, including Peter Pan playrooms with coloured ball pools and slides, and discos for teenagers. There are also age-related activity programmes, a night nursery for babysitting, all-day pizzerias and an early supper for small children.

Thomson (0990 502562) and Airtours (0870) 577775 offer more affordable family cruises from about £500 per adult but their older ships have more limited facilities. Thomson's *Sapphire*, for example, has only a small playroom in the bowels of the vessel, though its supervised children's club uses parts of the decks and even some lounges for games and activities. Airtours, however, is now creating a purpose-built playroom on one of its ships, the *Sundream*, and refurbishing playrooms on other vessels in time for this summer's school holidays.

Parents with very young children and a more *Upstairs, Downstairs* approach to child care may feel most at home on Cunard Line's flagship *QE2*, which has a Norland nanny-staffed traditional nursery on board during its transatlantic runs. Details: 01703 634166.

DOS AND DON'TS OF FAMILY CRUISING
DO thorough research before you book. Check which cruise ships are child-friendly, have the best facilities and run children's programmes.

... ask about supervision; reputable lines will be happy to tell you the ratio of "child counsellors" to youngsters.

... check age limits for joining child activity programmes; some ships will cater for children as young as two while others, the minimum age is four. Some ships also ask for one parent to be present at all times if the child is a toddler.

... be prepared to pay extra for babysitting services — about £180-£3 an hour. ... get as much information as you can. The Passenger Shipping Association has details of many different types of cruise holidays. For information on children's cruises, send an a/c to the PSA, Walmer House, 289-292 Regent Street, London W1R 9HE.

DON'T plan on many all-day escapes to explore ports *à deux*. Teenagers may cope all right, but tiny children need at least one parent on hand in case they become distressed ... forget to make any medication your children need and remember it will probably be down to you to administer it, as most cruise lines will not take responsibility for this.

Disney-on-Sea

THE first Disney cruise ship, *Disney Magic*, completes its maiden voyage on Monday. The four-day round trip from Florida's Port Canaveral is the first voyage in a year-round programme of short cruises to Nassau and Disney's own private island, Castaway Cay, both in the Bahamas. Maria Harding sneaked aboard the 2,400 passenger ship for a preview...

They may be irritating, but control freaks do have their good points. The gigantic Disney empire has been built through obsessive attention to detail and an insistence on controlling every aspect of its operations. And its new cruise line is no exception.

Indeed, Mr Mouse figures large in the cruise operation: access to the ship is via an archway in the shape of his head and his distinctive big black ears emblazoned on the ship's two red funnels act as its logo. The ship has some elegant touches, including a chic adults-only Italian restaurant. Disney expects half its passengers to be childless people. There is an Art Deco lobby and spa. Such features are not unusual on contemporary cruise ships, but Disney has also

used its experience in entertainment to inject some real imagination into the ship's design. This is most noticeable in the Animator's Palate dining room, themed around the art of the Disney cartoonists. It starts every dining session in black and white, with pencil sketches of Disney characters on the walls and white pillars in the shape of giant paintbrushes reaching up to painter's palettes on the ceiling. As dinner progresses, the paintbrushes, palettes, walls and cartoons are slowly infused with colours.

The highlight of the evening is a cartoon medley on giant screens around the room, after which guests are invited to "paint" their dessert using different sauces, and crayon their own Disney animations from sketches on the back of the menu. Disneyphiles — and kids of all ages — will love it. Children also get 15,000sq ft of space across the ship all to themselves. For teens, the ship has a New York coffee house-style common room with wall-mounted music centres, games and giant video screens. Ironically, this looks more sophisticated than the *Offbeat Comedy Club* in the adults-only Beat Street — an area which is over-themed.

The Disney presence also intrudes too much in Lumière's, a restaurant modelled on those of the classic ocean liners. Its lovely grey marble entrance and exquisite chandeliers are marred by a brash *Beauty and the Beast* mural. The food is generally good. Drinks prices are comparable with those of other Caribbean cruise ships, but tipping levels — at a recommended £6 per person a day — are higher.

But these are quibbles: *Disney-on-Sea* has made an impressive debut. And with the second ship, *Disney Wonder*, due out next year and rumours of more to come, my bet is that this show will run and run.



Mickey, Goofy and Minnie set sail

Disney Cruise Line's Bahamas cruises are packaged with three or four-day stays at the 469-mile Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando. Operators offering cruise-and-stay packages in 1998 include Virgin Holidays (01293 617181), British Airways Holidays (01293 723111), Kuoni (01306 742888) and Jetaway (01342 312033).

FACT FILE
Prices from Virgin Holidays for seven days in November and December 1998 start at £1,299 per adult. £614.50 per child, sharing a cabin and hotel room with parents, including breakfast, insurance, airport transfers, port taxes, and gratuities. Single supplement £125. *Xmas/New Year supplement £95 including flights, transfers, 7 nights accommodation on an open-ended holiday basis, UK departure tax, service of local goods. Not including insurance, overseas airport taxes, our current Conditions of Booking (available on request) shall apply to these cruises.

British Airways Holidays prices for this November start at £1,251 per adult, £385 per child, for the same deal.

Clearly, the magic of Disney doesn't come cheap. A four-day cruise is better value, as all meals are included at sea, while the land stay is room-only and food and drinks prices are steep in the resort.

Explore more of the Mediterranean for less on Cunard Vista fjord.

50%* off autumn sunshine cruises.

Sail to blue skies, historic sights and stunning scenery on a choice of three 14 night fly/cruise holidays aboard top-ranked Vista fjord — all with amazing 50% savings! It's an unmissable opportunity to see the best of the Mediterranean and experience Vista fjord's classic style, renowned cuisine and impeccable service. Departures in October and November. Prices from just £1820*. Book now!

See your travel agent or call Cunard for reservations on 01703 634166. For a brochure call 0800 000 500 quoting TSH974.

CUNARD LINE, 125, WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON EC1A 4BD. TEL: 020 7594 1000. *50% DISCOUNT OFF CRUISE ONLY PART OF PRICE. PRICES ARE PER PERSON AND INCLUDES OF PORT AND HAUNDRY CHARGES AS NORM ON 31. AUG. 1998. OFFERS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.

Costa Rica - Land of Wonders

with an optional extra week on the Caribbean island of Jamaica

From this November British Airways will, for the first time, be operating a direct flight from London to San Jose, Costa Rica, with wide-bodied B747 aircraft via Jamaica. Together with this new flight service we have arranged an introductory travel offer to the beautiful country of Costa Rica with an optional break on the return journey for those wishing a Caribbean sojourn in Jamaica.

Spend seven nights at the splendid Hotel Bougainville in an elevated position in beautiful tropical gardens overlooking San Jose and the Central Valley. Since Costa Rica is a small country with many micro-climates and San Jose being located roughly in the centre, the hotel and San Jose are ideal places from which to visit the numerous sights, national parks, and the two coastlines. In San Jose explore the Central Valley, see the Arenal Volcano, coffee plantations, orchid nurseries, Lankester Botanical Gardens, and the National Museum. Venturing out of San Jose see the Pacific coast with its glorious beaches and take a cruise to Tortuga Island or, towards the Caribbean coast, visit the Braulio Carrillo National Park and take a cruise along the Tortuguero Channels with their abundant wildlife and colourful birds.

7 nights from £695

JAMAICASTOP-OVER
Since the flight operates via Kingston Jamaica you may break the return journey for 7 nights at the Shaw Park Beach Hotel, Ocho Rios. Supplement based on standard twin on a room and breakfast basis £350. Single Supplement £195. Supplement for Christmas and New Year £95.

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICES
1998/99 Tuesdays - per person in twin
Nov 3, 10, 17, 24, 2995 - Dec 1, 8, 15, 22*, 29* £995
Jan 5, 12, 19, 26 £995 - Feb 2, 9, 16, 23 £995
Mar 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 £995 - April 6, 13, 20, 27 £995
Single suppl £125. *Xmas/New Year suppl £95
Including flights, transfers, 7 nights accommodation on an open-ended holiday basis, UK departure tax, service of local goods. Not including insurance, overseas airport taxes, our current Conditions of Booking (available on request) shall apply to these cruises.

0171-616 1000

VOYAGES JULES VERNE
21 Dorset Square, London W1V 6GQ
Travel Programme Ltd. ABTA 11661 ATOL 9820
Reservations: 020 7614 6666. Fax: 020 7614 6667. For information on our other services, please write to the nearest office.

Bilbao basques in bright beginnings

Here she stands at the bottom of Iparaguire Street, a vast collection of tins leaning away from each other at odd angles, shining against the green of the mountain behind. There she sails, when you see her from the sullied River Nervión, one prow mounted above the other to create a double hull, the sleek and gleaming vessel of a child's imagination.

Clad in titanium, each plate a little puffy at the edges, and riveted together in a stupendous metallic quilt, Bilbao's Guggenheim Museum is the wildest of fantasy lands — "the architecture of chaos," says a local commentator, "but it stands for the most democratic architecture ever. These days anyone can create whatever they want."

It is a simple story of getting on with it. Two decades back, Bilbao, set in a deep valley running inland from the coast, was a mass of shipyards and steelworks, pouring out acrid smoke, fiercely productive, known to its inhabitants as *el Botxo* — the Hole. All of a sudden its industries collapsed, and with them pride and confidence. Now it has re-emerged with the glitziest of architectural extravaganzas, an instant icon for the passing century.

The Guggenheim Museum is the newest addition to a city that has recovered from an industrial slump, says Adam Hopkins



An underground entrance, designed by Norman Foster

"Our symbol used to be the transporter bridge [a raised platform to carry goods or vehicles across the river]. But very sweetly the flower dog has come to replace it," says Alfonso Martínez Cearra, director of Metropoli 30, the body charged with producing schemes for urban regeneration. While looking for a

money, allowing the Guggenheim to walk all over it. But complaints have died in the face of reality; the citizens of Bilbao and the Basque Country are almost as enchanted with the museum as they are with El Puppy.

Three times as many people have visited it as was projected in even the most optimistic estimates; 700,000 in the first six months, making it the country's top gallery after the Prado in Madrid. Clearly this new branch of the Guggenheim is something to be seen, and not only the exterior. It has some magnificent — and some indifferent — works of modern art in vast and lofty settings. The exhibitions are of international class.

But just as important, the museum may now well serve as entry-point to a city often disregarded owing to its super-smoky past, but which has surprising interest.

On one side of the River Nervión, recalling the days when the wool of Old Castile flowed through on its journey to the garment-manufacturers of Flanders, there lies a tight-packed and rather impressive old town — narrow streets, old shops, some fashionable, some laden with thick and flannelly underwear reminiscent of Old Spain.

A solid theatre by the main bridge ushers in an arcaded neo-classical square, the Plaza Nueva. There is a large Gothic cathedral — shut for repairs but with a quaint collection of shops built into the outer recesses of its apse. There is a three-storey market, its basement an exhibition space for superbly fresh fish, almost a rival to the Guggenheim. There is a host of bars and restaurants.

Just across the river stands the dignified *Ensanche*, or Extension, built up from the turn of the century, when industrial production began to surge. Here there are banks, business houses and respectable apartment blocks. Here, too, are plenty of bars and restaurants (these are ubiquitous in Bilbao).

The business and the banking were secondary products. The real work was done on the left bank of the Nervión, six miles down to the sea. Today, this is a place of abandoned steel works and mostly (one or two survive) exhausted shipyards, not to mention the dense tenements where the workers still hold out, partly subscribing now to middle-class values, partly radicalised, the walls graffiti-laden.

It was on the right bank of the river, terminating in sandy beaches, that the one-time ironmasters built their mighty mansions, half-timbered and with fancy brickwork. Ten years ago they were in decay. But schools and institutions have now moved in and living units have become much smaller.

But even with the divisions, what binds Bilbao together is the sense of sociability and community. The city centre is so small that most people travel on foot. They do not telephone to fix up meetings but make their way to likely bars in the run-up to lunch and dinner and there they find their friends.

For those not keen on walking, it is easy to hop on a bus or train or, on the right bank, on the new metro. The entrances are made of glass, in rectangles, or more typically, in bent hose-ripe, half-nautilus shapes affectionately known as *Fosteritos*, after Norman Foster, the British architect who built the system.

The British influence is strong here. British engineers came to help with the technical side of steel-making 90 years ago and many of them stayed.



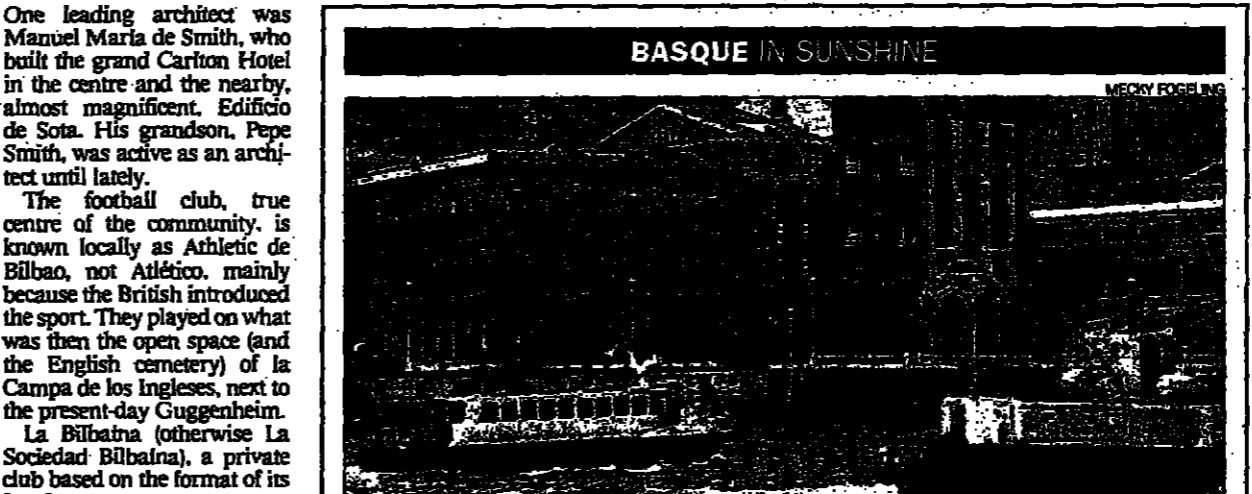
The modern structures of the Guggenheim Museum juxtaposed with a street scene of strollers drinking from a fountain



Pure Alpine Magic

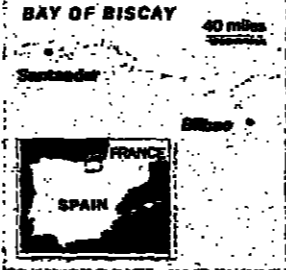
Discover the best of Austria in Tirol's fabulous Summer Magazine. It is packed full with articles which capture the pure essence of holidaying in Austria's best loved province. You can obtain a free copy by returning the coupon. Or telephone the Austrian National Tourist Office on 0171 629 0461.

Please rush me a FREE copy of the Tirol Summer Magazine '98 (stocks subject to availability)
Name:
Address:
Postcode:
Return to: Tirol Summer Times, Austrian National Tourist Office, Mariahilf, Strussmayer, PO Box 2106, 1010 Vienna



The River Nervión at Portugalete separates the old town from the new

One leading architect was Manuel María de Smith, who built the grand Carlton Hotel in the centre and the nearby, almost magnificent, Edificio de Sota. His grandson, Pepe Smith, was active as an architect until lately.
The football club, true centre of the community, is known locally as Athletic de Bilbao, not Atlético, mainly because the British introduced the sport. They played on what was then the open space (and the English cemetery) of la Campa de los Ingleses, next to the present-day Guggenheim.
La Bilbatna (otherwise La Sociedad Bilbatna), a private club based on the format of its London counterparts, occupies a handsome building by the river, complete with excellent library, a comfortable Bar Ingles and severe oil portraits of earlier members. Many of its present members wear blue shirts and dark blue suits, the apparent uniform of all Bilbao's businessmen, known as the English style or *el estilo inglés*.
Bilbao has a strong sense of its own identity. It's a city with its suit sleeves rolled up — despite the foreign influences.



DIRECT TO BRITTANY, NORMANDY & SPAIN
Why drive the long way round when you can sail direct?
We land you closer to where you'd like to be.
With a choice of day and overnight sailings, luxury cruise ferries and award winning service, your holiday starts the moment you drive on board.
Perfect for all of Holiday France & beyond
VALUE PLUS FARES FROM £80 RETURN FOR CAR + 5 PASSENGERS
RESERVATIONS INFORMATION 0990 360 360 OR SEE YOUR TRAVEL AGENT

A class working act by the sea

A class working act by the sea

Holidaymakers return year after year to Skegness, famed for its cheap and cheerful brand of family fun, says Stephen McClarence

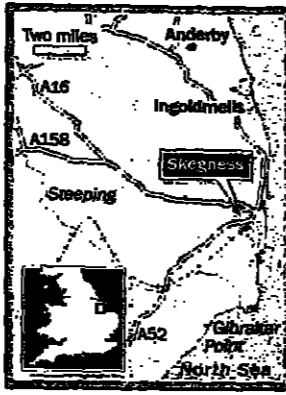
Keith Morrison has good news for wheelchair-users. "The great thing about Skegness," he says, "is that it's so flat you can be pushed from anywhere to anywhere without giving your helper a hernia." As the resort's tourism and marketing manager, Mr Morrison has a vested interest in positive sales talk. He needs to have Skegness, on the rump of Lincolnshire, has a lot to live down.

The Lonely Planet Guide to Britain dismisses it as "the kind of place the English middle and upper classes wouldn't dream of being seen dead in". It caught Paul Theroux on a bad day. "It was a low, loud, faded seaside resort," he writes in *The Kingdom by the Sea*, his account of a marathon journey around Britain's coast. "It was utterly joyless. Its vulgarity was uninteresting. It was painfully ugly."

But that was 16 years ago. Theroux was jaded after too long on the road — and, well, why should Skeggy worry? It has a way of dealing with charges of vulgarity. It thumbs its nose and blows a loud Lincolnshire raspberry. Skeggy is the east coast's answer to Blackpool's bracing brass. It once appointed an Official Falsies Inspector to check beauty contestants' swimsuits for bosom-boosting padding. It has organised donkey conventions and, when someone complained that the beach was like the Sahara, it borrowed camels from Long-leat for a photo-opportunity on the sand dunes. It sells canisters of Genuine Skegness Air ("canned on the beach") and issues Bank of Skeggy cheque books, slot of vouchers offering £2 off lunch at a burger bar or £2 off ten-pin bowling. "Have you got a Skeggy die?" asks Mr Morrison, rummaging in a cupboard. "A Skeggy mouse pad?"

Skegness is a doggedly working-class resort, determinedly bingo-and-chips. It pulls in crowds from the North and Midlands to Europe's biggest caravan park (23,000 vans) and to regiments of hotels and boarding houses. The regulars' loyalty makes Skegness Britain's fifth most popular resort — after Blackpool, the Torbay resorts, Great Yarmouth and Bourne-on-Mouth. But this year it is only a fair-to-middling season, with plenty of "vacancies" signs hung in lace-curtained front windows.

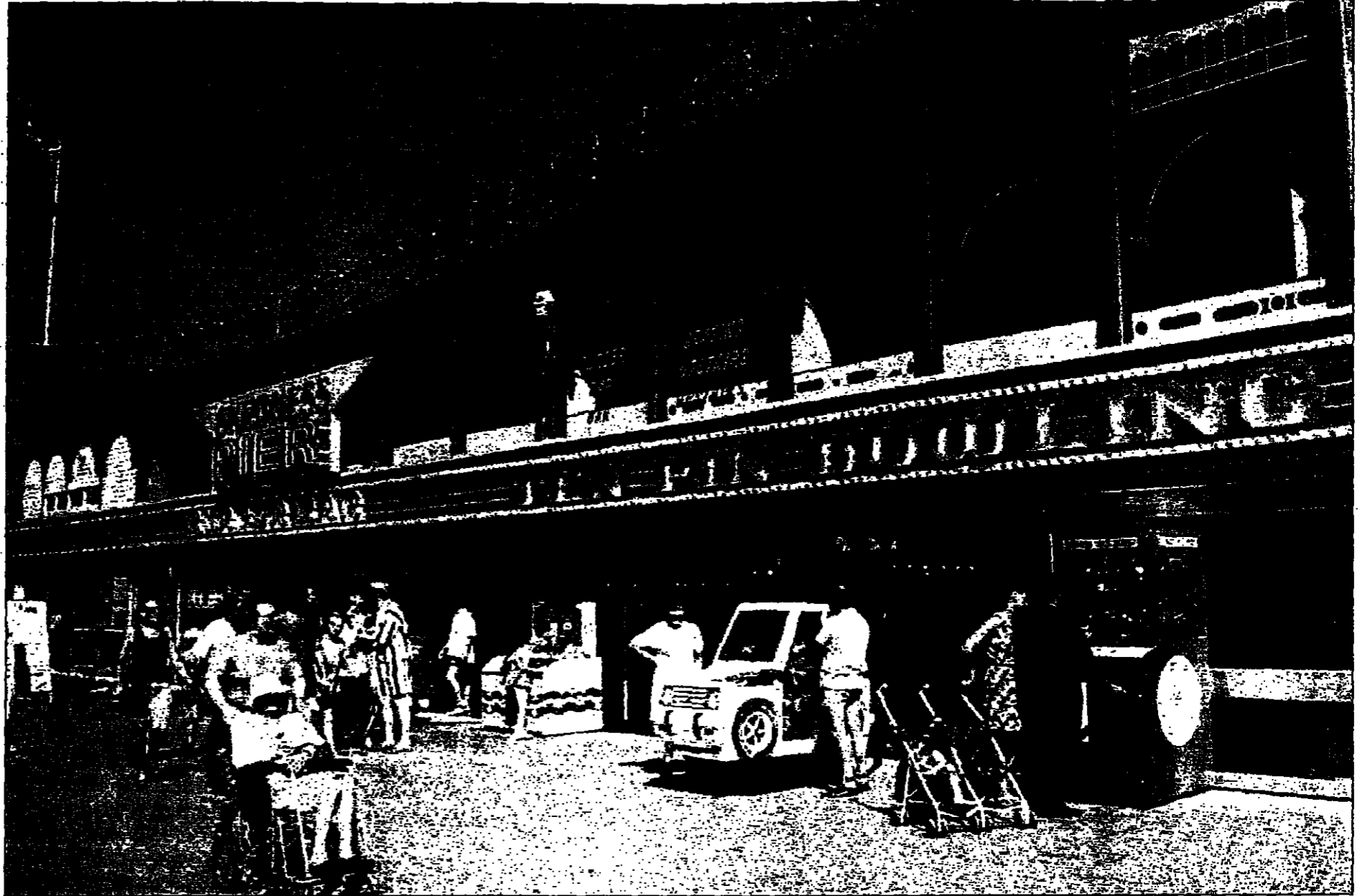
Traders blame the World Cup, the weather and the economy. Mr Morrison is more upbeat, as befits a man wearing a waistcoat plastered with images of the Jolly Fisherman, the gaily skipping old salt who has become the resort's symbol. "We're doing OK; we're not doing fab," he says. "We could do with a bit more sunshine. But we did very well at Christmas and the New Year — sold out, no beds available." Skegness has some impor-



"It's so bracing": statue to Skeggy's famous fisherman

tant assets: it is cheap. A week's B&B can cost just £60 a head; fishcake and chips cost £1; many of the amusement arcade slot machines offer 2p games. It is also strong on "family fun" in a staidly British way. "It used to be a bit of a joke to come here," says Lee Pollard, a Barnsley social worker. "But it's improved a lot lately. There's plenty for the kids to do." They go off ten-pin bowling.

Outside her beach chalet (a quarter-mile from the sea), Marlene Hope from Doncaster pauses from her word-puzzle book. This is her tenth year in Skegness. Why? "It's fairly clean and the air's bracing," says Mrs Hope, who is in her late fifties and is here with sister Jean, friend Gerald and poodle Duchess. "My sister-in-law came for over 60 years. It used to set her up for the win-



The pier at Skegness offers amusement arcades, ten-pin bowling, slot machines, splendid gulps of east coast air — and easy access for wheelchair-users

It was bad weather that almost finished off British seaside holidays 20 years ago. Cheap packages made foreign sunshine more enticing. Skegness, however, fought back. It now offers The Great Indoors as an alternative to The Great Outdoors. There is a shopping centre on the High Street (or "Chip Pan Alley" as locals call it, after its high-density cluster of fish and chip shops).

"Sausage and chips go better for £1 than fishcake and chips," says Andrew Healey at the Fish Chips & Burgers Bar. A novelty this year is "Chicken Teddies" — chicken outfits moulded into teddy-bear shapes and fried in bread-crumbs. "Pea-mix" — chips and mushy peas — remains a bestseller.

Three miles north of the town at Ingoldmells, beyond the caravans and Butlins, is Fantasy Island — billed as "Britain's First Themed Indoor Family Resort". It features Volcanic Eruption — "an Armageddon crashendo [sic] of pyrotechnics". But for high-tech, read high-tack. South Seas-style huts, palm trees and plastic parrots cannot disguise just another funfair with a roof — and a market selling Teletubby jigsaws, steak-wiches (steak sandwiches) and Big-is-Beautiful bras (up to 48DD; no falsies here).

The amusements do not appeal to everyone. The Majid family from Nottingham is content to picnic on the sea front — samosas, chapattis and a first glimpse of the sea. Amazing and beautiful, they say. Add much better than Nottingham. It is "Trip Day", when the coach tours come in, and by luncheon the town is heaving with pensioners from the Midlands. They buy false-teeth rock for their grandchildren and peer at joke stick-on boils and Gazza mugs.

In the Crown Hotel, the Blind Date team is recruiting contestants. Solicitor David Eager — a local personality — is filling in the enrolment form. "Who would you most like to go on a blind date with?" it asks. "Cherie Blair," he says. "Not much of a looker but plenty to talk about."

At the other end of the Skeggy spectrum from all the tack-tackery is Gibraltar Point nature reserve. After Lincoln Cathedral, it is the county's most-visited attraction, with 192,000 visitors last year — "mostly holidaymakers fed up with the hustle and bustle of Skegness," says warden Kevin Wilson.

Just three miles south of the town, it narrowly avoided being developed as a resort after the First World War — a Little Skeggy, complete with its own speedway. Happily, the land was protected. Its 1,500 acres now offer wetland, salt marshes, sand banks, a constant

backdrop of birdsong and a precious tranquillity. It has become part of the alternative Skegness — best appreciated, perhaps, by staying at the party 17th-century Vine Hotel at the southern edge of town. Mullioned windows, ivy-covered walls, Tennyson as a former guest, cucumber mousse at dinner, crown green bowls outside. Mrs Miniver would have been happy.

But first, an evening at the Embassy Centre ("Ignored by the Arts Council") its sign used to say), David Essex, Danny la Rue, "Janice Sutton's Razzle Dazzle 'Em", Cannon and Ball, "Paul Wheeler Sings Jim Reeves" — and The Good Olde Days, Britain's longest-running music hall show. The Gods, as the Embassy people call it, has been playing Skeggy for 32 years — almost since the days of Dorothy Sturdee's Ladies' Orchestra and Professor Billie "Peggy" Thomson, whose special stunt was being thrown into the sea in a burning sack and escaping with his wooden leg still uncharred.

Gods used to play here for a week. Now it does only Tuesdays, crosses the country to Rhyd on Wednesdays. Fleet-

wood on Thursdays and Paignton on Fridays. "It's a lot of driving," says impresario Duggie Chapman, big on signet rings, in a dressing room full of signed photographs of Ken Dodd. "I once staged a show with old variety stars. Their combined age was 1,020."

In the auditorium, the Thora Hird Lookalike Society is out in force with perms as tight as pom-pom dahlias. "Have you found enough to do?" one woman asks another. "We've had a cup of tea and a custard," says the other.

The bill includes "Who-were-you-with-last-night?" singalongs, the Musical Holloways (novelty xylophonists) and the Fabulous Voice of Geoff Coles, who climaxes with Venetian ballads in tribute to Mario Lanza.

"Hands up all those who'd like to come on a short holiday to Venice," he says. In an audience of 600, just two hands are raised. It says a lot for Skeggy.

STILL SO BRACING AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

■ Stephen McClarence stayed in Skegness as a guest of East Lindsey District Council's Leisure and Tourism Department.

■ Getting there: Skegness is at the eastern end of the A158, with A52 and A16 links to the A1. There are regular direct trains from Nottingham and Grantham (national rail inquiries: 0345 484960).

■ Staying there: Vine Hotel, Vine Road (01754 763018) has rooms from £65. Palm Court Hotel, South Parade (01754 767711), £17 pp per night B&B; £23 including evening meal. Seven nights' bed, breakfast and evening meal for £125.

■ Food: Plenty of fish and chip shops and restaurants. Epton's cafe, High Street (01754 763754) has a good-value Haddock Special at £3.70. The Vine Hotel (as above) has an excellent table d'hôte dinner at £16.50.

■ Activities: Gibraltar Point nature reserve (01754 762677) is three miles south of Skegness. Open daily, dawn to dusk. Visitor centre open daily, 10.30am to 5pm. There is free access but car parking is £2 per day. Twice-daily bus service 95 until October 4 on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday (£1.75 return), bus and train hotline: 01522 553135. Taxi from Skegness: about £3.50 one-way. Free guided walks in August: daily (2pm) except Thursday. Children's activities on Thursday, 2-4pm.

■ Embassy Centre, Grand Parade (01754 766333) has nightly shows until September 30. Ken Dodd appears on August 5 and 19 and also on



Sand, smiles — and windbreaks on Skegness beach

September 2 and 16. The Good Olde Days will be appearing on September 8, 15, 22 and 29.

■ Skegness Carnival (August 9-14) includes parades, exhibitions, beach games, baby shows and swimming galas.

■ Reading: Paul Theroux's *The Kingdom by the Sea* (Penguin, £7.99) and *Britain: A Travel Survival Kit* (Lonely Planet Publications, £14.99).

■ Information: Skegness Tourist Centre (01754 764821).

EXPEDITION CRUISING
Another World

WHERE IN THE WORLD
BEYOND BOROBUDUR
12th to 27th November 1998
Singapore to Bali

Visiting - Tambelan Islands, Palau Kebaru, Cirebon, Semarang (for Borobudur), Probolinggo (for Mount Bromo), Kangean Islands, Medang, Satonda, Komodo and Lombok.
Prices from £3690.

BALI TO THE BARRIER REEF
24th November to 10th December 1998
Bali to Cairns

Visiting - Lombok, Santonda, Komodo, Kalabita, Banda Islands, Triton Bay, Thursday Island and the Barrier Reef.
Prices from £4435.

UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS
20th December 1998 to 8th January 1999
Cairns to Christchurch

Visiting - Hinchinbrook Island, Whitsunday Islands, Norfolk Island, Bay of Islands, Tauranga (forRotorua), Napier, Picton, Milford Sound and Bluff.
Prices from £5450.

NEW ZEALAND COASTAL VOYAGE
29th January to 18th February 1999
Christchurch to Auckland

Visiting - Bluff, Snares & Muttonbird Island, Fiordland, Stewart Island, Dunedin, Christchurch, Kaikoura, Picton, Wellington, Cape Kidnappers, Napier, Tauranga (for Rotorua) and the Bay of Islands.
Prices from £4995.

EXPLORE NEW ZEALAND & TASMANIA BY SEA
12th February to 6th March 1999
Auckland to Melbourne

Visiting - Bay of Islands, Tauranga (for Rotorua), Napier, Wellington, Picton, Kaikoura, Christchurch, Dunedin, Stewart Island, Fiordland, Milford Sound, Hobart and Devonport.
Prices from £5395.

AUSTRALIAN COASTAL ODYSSEY
2nd to 23rd March 1999
Melbourne to Cairns

Visiting - King Island, Devonport, Port Arthur, Eden, Bateman's Bay, Jervis Bay, Sydney, Broken Bay & Hawksbury River, Newcastle (for Hunter Valley), Fraser Island, Lady Elliott Island, Cid Harbour and Hinchinbrook Island.
Prices from £5695.

VOYAGES TO THE EAST INDIES, AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND ABOARD THE OCEANIC ODYSSEY

Until the 1980's Expedition Cruising was little known to travellers in the UK, although it had a strong following for many years by serious travellers in the United States. The concept of small ship cruising, without the glitz and glamour usually offered on board traditional cruise vessels really came into its own with the arrival of the *Calamian Star*. She was able to quickly establish a strong following amongst those who enjoy sailing with a hundred or so like minded souls to some of the most interesting and untouched places in the world.

Now firmly established as an alternative to the big ships, expedition cruising attracts many thousands of travellers from the UK each year who appreciate the comfort and peace that can only be found aboard a small ship which is dedicated to the needs of genuine travellers.

During the winter of 1998/9 one of the finest expedition cruise vessels, the *Oceanic Odyssey* will be undertaking a series of voyages through the islands of the East Indies to Australia and New Zealand. We have developed a number of exciting different itineraries which will commence in Singapore, cross the Java Sea and continue through the Islands of Indonesia to Papua New Guinea and Australia's Great Barrier Reef. There follows a comprehensive look at both Australia and New Zealand.

OCEANIC ODYSSEY

Designed in Holland and built in Japan in 1989 the *Oceanic Odyssey* is a small deluxe vessel accommodating up to 115 passengers. She is remarkably substantial in size (3030 gross tonnage) for a vessel which only accommodates just over 100 passengers. Her captain, officers and management are European and the service staff and crew are Indonesian.

All cabins are outside and unusually spacious ranging from 191 square feet to 363 square feet for the suite. The cabins are elegantly furnished with either twin or queen sized beds and a living area with sofa. There is excellent wardrobe space, mini bar and VCR. The bathrooms are spacious and have tub baths. Cabins on deck 3 have port holes, whilst all other decks have windows. The deck 6 cabins have small private verandas and decks 3 to 6 are served by a passenger lift. The public areas are beautifully decorated and include a large main lounge

Bar, library, gymnasium, 2 saunas (male and female), swimming pool, jacuzzi, hairdresser, shop and a clinic with a full time doctor. The single sitting dining room is large, bright and airy and the galley under the supervision of a European chef serves delicious, healthy meals. The open deck areas are vast and include a 70 metre jogging track on the Sun Deck. There are also shaded areas on the Lido area with comfortable loungers and tables with umbrellas.

SHORE EXCURSIONS ARE INCLUDED

Unlike most cruises we include the cost of your shore excursions. On many of the forays ashore we will use the ship's Zodiacs, as these inflatable and nimble craft are ideal for beach landings and exploring sheltered coastal waters and rivers.

FINNAIR OFFERS SAVER FARES FROM LONDON

STOCKHOLM
£126

HELSINKI
£186

Including taxes, certain conditions apply

Book by 16th August
Travel up to 30th Sept

Daily services from Gatwick in association with British Airways

Reservations
0950 997711

or see your local Travel Agent

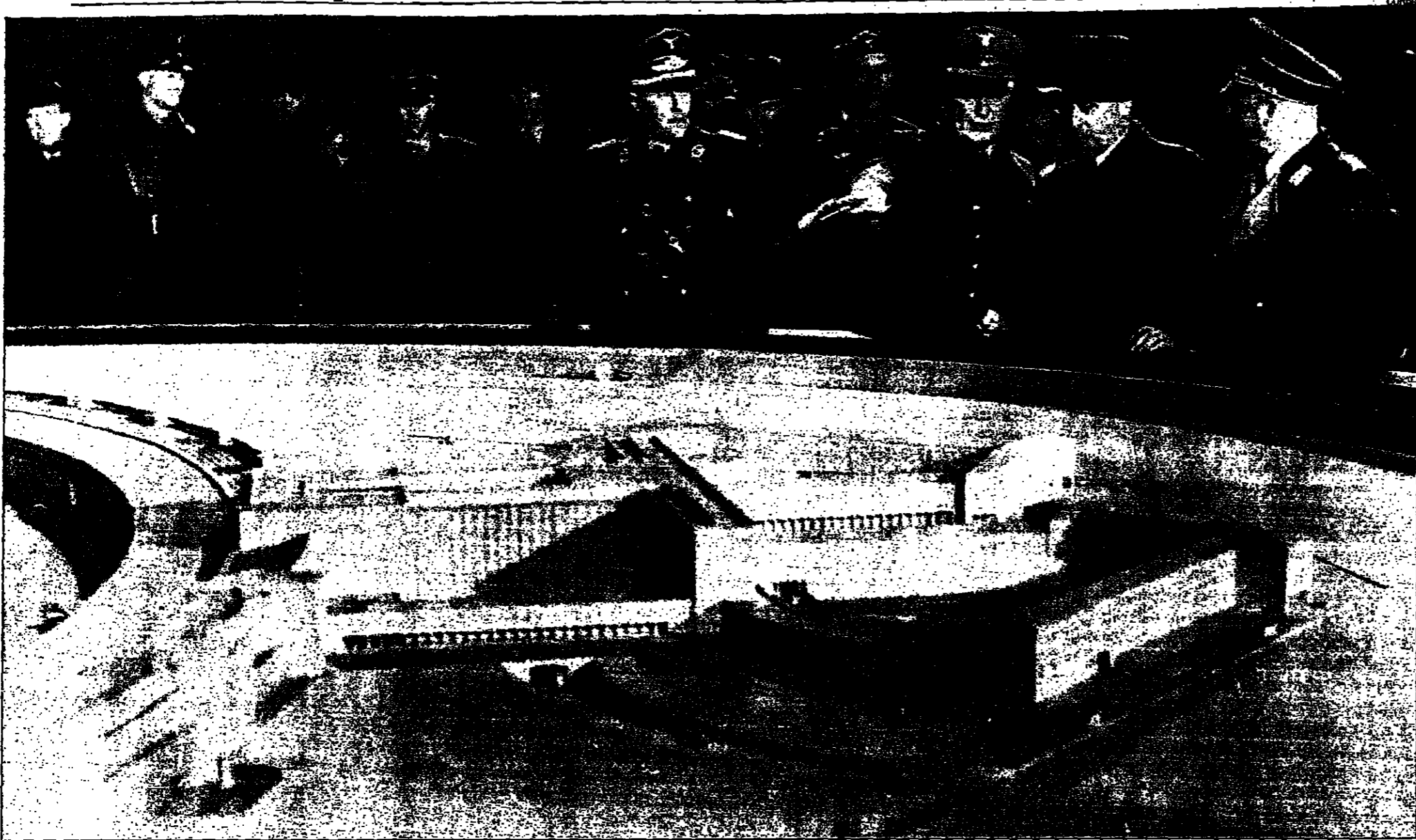
FINNAIR

NOBLE CALEDONIA LIMITED

11 CHARLES STREET, MAYFAIR, LONDON W1X 1LE
TEL: 0171-409 0370/335 1424 FAX: 0171-409 0634
ATA
E-MAIL: info@noble-caledonia.co.uk
WEBSITE: www.noble-caledonia.co.uk V231X

TRAVELLERS' BULLETIN BOARD

Berlin's famous airport, built on Hitler's orders in the 1930s, is to close, says Jeannette Hyde



Goering examines a scale model of Tempelhof airport in Berlin during December 1937; it is the fourth longest building in Europe and originally had a ballroom and a 2,000-seater restaurant

Tempelhof to lose its wings

Campaigners are fighting to save Tempelhof airport in Berlin, which was originally built on Hitler's orders, from being closed down. The listed airport is losing £6.6 million annually and is due to close in 2002. But it is dear to the hearts of many Berliners, despite its Hitler origins. It is not only architecturally significant, but it was also the site of the Berlin airlift in 1948, when America and Britain saved West Berlin from falling into Russian hands by supplying the city from the air. However, it is the airport's central location which is its biggest drawback. Tiles have been chipped off local rooftops by low-flying aircraft and engine noise would make the airport unacceptable for regular 24-hour use.

Designed by Professor Ernst Sagebiel, the building is mammoth. It is the fourth longest building in Europe and once had a ballroom and 2,000-seater restaurant, although original plans for a sliding roof were never fulfilled. The top of the building was tiered, in the style of a football arena, to enable up to 65,000 people to watch air shows and other Nazi events. There is also sufficient car parking space for 10,000 cars.

The Nazi legacy is omnipresent. A secret bunker was discovered at the end of the war containing the charred remains of thousands of Hitler's rolls of film. It was also rumoured that he operated an underground aircraft factory at the airport. After the war, the airport became a US airbase until 1992 when it was turned over to commercial use. Most of the 12 airlines still operating at Tempelhof fly short-haul, as larger long-haul aircraft would be too noisy. Only a fraction of the airport's capacity is being used and acres of corridors and offices are lying empty.

Bernd Buhman, a spokesman for Berlin Tourismus Marketing, said: "Before our reunification, Tempelhof and Tegel airports served West Berlin. Schoenefeld, which is just outside the city, served the east. It has now been decided that Schoenefeld will be the future main airport for Berlin and Tempelhof and Tegel will be phased out." Wolfgang Runge, a retired safety officer for Tempelhof and now a guide, said: "I showed a government minister and a group of architects around Tempelhof about three weeks ago. The minister said he wants the airport kept in one piece and not broken up when it closes. All the architects were racking their brains as to what you could do with such a large building. I told them the best thing to do would be to keep it as an airport. When the parliament moves here [from Bonn], the politicians may want to keep it open in some form, especially when they see that you can get to the Reichstag in five minutes from Tempelhof while it

will take them 45 minutes from Schoenefeld." Benhard Lisutin, chairman of ICAT, the campaign group set up to save Tempelhof airport, said: "It is a city-centre airport building which you cannot use for any other thing because that is what it was designed for. There are plans around for musical theatres, cinemas and shopping malls but if you put maximum use of space here for things related to an airport you could keep it running." To arrange a Tempelhof tour phone Mrs Meier: 00 49 30 6091 1660. Tours cost £3 per person.

will take them 45 minutes from Schoenefeld." Benhard Lisutin, chairman of ICAT, the campaign group set up to save Tempelhof airport, said: "It is a city-centre airport building which you cannot use for any other thing because that is what it was designed for. There are plans around for musical theatres, cinemas and shopping malls but if you put maximum use of space here for things related to an airport you could keep it running." To arrange a Tempelhof tour phone Mrs Meier: 00 49 30 6091 1660. Tours cost £3 per person.

I should follow my own advice

I AM going to have to learn to follow my own advice. Last-minute holidays are in short supply this summer, as I have regularly warned readers of these pages. Tour operators have managed to balance supply and demand pretty well this year, and pent-up post-World Cup demand has further fuelled late sales. So when I decided I needed a break just ten days before I wanted to travel, it did not come as much of a surprise to find there was very little around. I was lucky enough to sort out a trip with operator Simply Cruise, which specialises in hunting out villas and apartments in quiet parts of the island, but as all flights to Chania are fully booked I will have to fly out of Manchester and in to Gatwick. This rather mad arrangement is not really so bad - after all, Virgin Trains will whisk me up to Manchester the night before my flight for just £9.50 one-way, the same price as a one-way ticket on the express service from London Victoria to Gatwick. But I can understand many travellers, especially families, not wanting the bother of flying in and out of different airports. So the moral of this story is - do as I say, not as I do.

MORE communiqués from the Spanish Blue Flag monitors, concerned by my com-

TRIP WIRES
by Cath Urquhart
TRAVEL EDITOR

ments about dirty water off Stages beach. They have now sent me bathing water data charts showing that the day I was there was, sadly, one of those rare occasions when the authorities noted the "presence of solids from both human and vegetable origin" off that particular beach, Playa de la Ribera. Also on that day there was "the almost unique presence of algae", and "other floating objects" and "some plastic" and "one or two logs". I am beginning to wish I had never asked. However, my man at Adeac (which oversees the Blue Flag scheme in Spain) promises he will ask Stages town council to invest in a "cleaning boat" to be sent out to collect floating rubbish. I might not swim off Stages again, but I am pleased that they are taking my complaint seriously.

Grand day for the white rose county

Stephen McClarence says the Yorkshire Day celebrations will be the biggest ever. And barny too

Yorkshire Day falls today, and to mark it Britain's biggest annual procession of mayors and Lord Mayors will take to the streets of Huddersfield. More than 40 Yorkshire mayors in full regalia and preceded by their mace-bearers

will march through the town to attend a church service and thank God for creating Yorkshire. Eighty miles north, a Yorkshire councillor dressed as King Canute will sing the county's praises in Old Norse. And in Leeds, Tetley's Brewery will hand out horse

manure (courtesy of its Shire horses) to encourage gardeners to grow white roses, Yorkshire's floral symbol. This year's celebrations are billed as the biggest, though not necessarily the barniest, ever. Dozens of events are being staged across the county - from a Yorkshire pudding cooking competition at Sawdon, near Scarborough, to a Yorkshire dialect evening at Metham, near Holmfirth, setting for television's *Last of the Summer Wine*.

The first Yorkshire Day was held in 1975 as a protest against local government changes that ended the administrative role of the county's three ancient Ridings - North, East and West.

The Yorkshire Ridings Society was formed to campaign for their reinstatement and each year founder member Colin Holt has led a ceremonial walk round the city walls of York. He stops at the four Bars (gates) to recite the Yorkshire Declaration of Integrity, which affirms the traditional Ridings and all things Yorkshire. Says Mr Holt: "What Yorkshire Day is about is an expression of a sense of identity and community, a celebration of Yorkshire being different in a world of conformity."



Hear ye, hear ye: Reading the Declaration of Integrity

The Declaration is also read out at markets and outside town halls throughout Yorkshire - in Latin, modern English, Old Norse and, this year, Old Norse. The language of the Vikings who first drew Yorkshire's boundaries. It's this version that councillor Stan Wilson, in the guise of King Canute, will be reading at Redcar at 11.30am, 1,123 years after the first recorded reference to the Ridings. Despite the serious underlying purpose and money-raising activities for charity, some Yorkshire people worry that it has become a media and marketing jamboree, perpetuating

stereotypes of whippets, black puddings and flat caps. "We have to be careful not to overdo it, but regional distinctiveness adds colour. I'm against a grey uniformity spreading over everything, which is the way the world is going," says Arnold Kellett from the Yorkshire Dialect Society. The procession has been organised by the Yorkshire Society which aims to promote the county. "Our society gives annual awards to people who have promoted Yorkshire. Vice-presidents include Sir Bernard Ingham and Richard Whiteley. We're not a joke," says chairman David Daniel.

□ The British summer is on its way, allegedly. Make the most of it at the Thistle Hotel, Brighton (01273 206700). Three nights' B&B starts at £35, and three nights' half-board is £65 per person. Children up to 15 can stay free when sharing a room with two adults. Valid until Sept 6.

□ Greek specialist Kosmar (0181-368 6833) is offering two weeks' B&B at the Jason Hotel, Ipsos, Corfu starting at £369 per person in August. Return flights on Fridays from Gatwick, Manchester and Newcastle, transfers and taxes included.

□ In need of pampering? Nutfield Priory hotel and Priory Health and Leisure Club, in Redhill, Surrey (01737 822066) is offering an August break of £60 per person per night. The offer includes a welcome bottle of champagne, dinner, breakfast, and full use of facilities. Valid during August.

□ Ladettes are flocking to Ibiza in their masses. Join them with Magic of Spain (0181-748 4200); seven nights' self-catering at the Apartments Next in Ibiza starts at £329 per person, including flights from Heathrow to Seville, car hire, five nights' half-board including wine at the Hacienda de San Rafael and taxes. Valid until Aug 25.

□ Kicker Holidays (0171-231 3333) has reduced its breaks in Andalucia from £878 to £678 per person. The price includes return flights from Heathrow to Seville, car hire, five nights' half-board including wine at the Hacienda de San Rafael and taxes. Valid until Aug 25.

JOANNA HUNTER

SPECIAL OFFER
from
£399
PENANG
12th beach stay on the island of Penang

Enjoy a stay on the island of Penang, off the west coast of the mainland of Malaysia. As well as the relaxing beaches, a good range of excursion options are available to show you the varied life and culture here. From a fascinating Chinatown with shophouses and temples, to the fisherman's stilt village and traditional Malay villages in the countryside. *Copthorne Orchid*: medium class hotel, located on a small beach at Tanjung Bunga. Restaurant, bar. Swimming pool/pool bar, tennis, squash. Rooms are airconditioned with phone, TV, minibar, tea/coffee facilities, bath and shower.

Departures:	Price:	Departures:	Price:
10, 19 Sep '98	£399	17, 24, 31 Oct	£449
21, 28 Sep	£399	07, 12 Nov	£449
26, 30 Sep	£399	14 Nov	£479
03, 10 Oct	£399	19, 21, 26, 28 Nov	£449

Breakfast £5 per person per night extra

The price includes: Scheduled flights London. UK Govt dept tax of £20. 12 nts accom (no meals). Transfers. Prices per person sharing twin. Not included: Local dept tax (approx. £7). Optional insurance: £55. Booking conditions apply.

To book, telephones: (open daily inc Sat/Sun)
01306 744300
Fax: 01306 744384
AAYA VANDU
ATOL 132

TRAVELLERS' TIP

Send your suggestion, in no more than 75 words, on a postcard to: **Travellers' Tip, The Times Travel Desk, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN, with your name, address and daytime telephone number. If yours is published, you will win the Lonely Planet guidebook and phrase book of your choice.**

and you will have plenty of luggage space for new purchases and no washing to do on your return. - Carina Finch, Sutton, Surrey

FLYING VISITS

Departures: Monday 2 August to Saturday 2 August

Origin	Destination	Lowest Fare	Promotional Fare	Flexible Fare
London	Paris	£299	£299	£349
London	Amsterdam	£299	£299	£349
London	Brussels	£299	£299	£349
London	Geneva	£299	£299	£349
London	Frankfurt	£299	£299	£349
London	Munich	£299	£299	£349
London	Zurich	£299	£299	£349
London	Barcelona	£299	£299	£349
London	Madrid	£299	£299	£349
London	Rome	£299	£299	£349
London	Nice	£299	£299	£349
London	Paris	£299	£299	£349

Execs find it hard to de-stress

AS Tony Blair and family head for the Tuscan hills, a new survey shows that many stressed executives find it hard to ever switch off from work, writes Jeannette Hyde. One in ten said they never forget office worries on holiday. A staggering 75 per cent of 622 business people surveyed in the Hyatt Hotels and Resorts' "Spreadsheets to Sunshine: Executives on Vacation" study admitted telephoning the office while on holiday. Sixty per cent receive phone calls or e-mail from the office, and 54 per cent actually take work on holiday with them. Laptops feature alongside sun-tan cream and golf clubs in 24 per cent of the study's participants' luggage. Half of executives do not take up their full allocation of holidays per year. The higher up the ladder you are, the more likely you are not to take all your entitlement. Holidays can also be a time when high fliers reflect on their careers. Given the breathing space, more than half of executives dream of escaping the rat race and down-shifting when they go away from the office. Wonder what? Tony Blair is thinking right now!

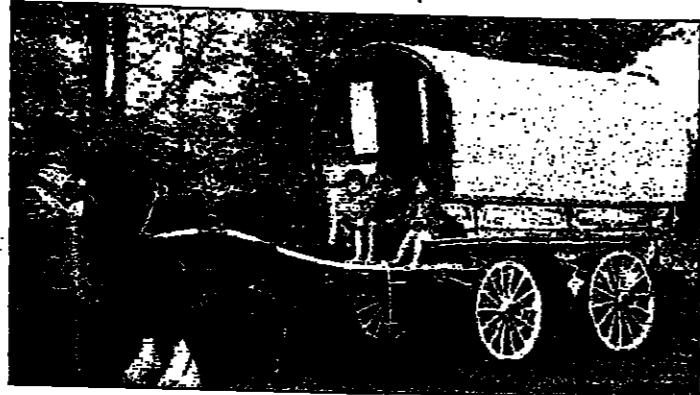
EXCLUSIVE OFFER
HYATT HOTELS
SUMMER NIGHTS

TRAVELLERS' BULLETIN BOARD

TRAVEL TIPS by Jill Crawshaw



TRAVEL JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR



Trot off for a gypsy picnic along Suffolk's country lanes

Family fun at Toad Hall

Opening its doors today is Fowey Hall Hotel in Cornwall, the youngest sibling of the nine-year-old Woolley Grange Hotel near Bath, one of the first hotels especially designed for families in Britain. There are now four such hotels - the others are the Old Bell at Malmesbury, and Moonfleet Manor in Weymouth - all with fully-staffed play den, baby-listening services, books, games and videos. Children who stay in their parents' room stay free. Lunches and teas for children are £5 each. A former Cornish mansion, Fowey Hall (01726 833866), now restored to Gothic Victorian splendour, is believed to have been the model for Toad Hall in Kenneth Graham's *The Wind in the Willows*.

Double rooms with cot or bed (which can take up to two children) cost £125 to £140 B&B per night; singles cost £100; large doubles or suites from £160 to £245.

Classic drives

For wannabe Michael Schumachers, the *Fride of Britain* hotel consortium (0181-421 8686) is offering the chance to drive a Ferrari or other classic or vintage car on country weekends - though you will have to stick to the speed limit in the rural lanes and villages where most of the hotels are situated.

Prices are from £950 to £1,372 for a three-night weekend, which includes half-board accommodation and hire of an Inspector Morse-type Jaguar 3.8 Mk II, an E-Type Jaguar, Porsche 911 or an MGA. But you will need a world champion's salary if you choose the Ferrari, which costs an extra £235 to £410, or a staggering £1,050 more if you go for the convertible Spider.

Outdoor theatre

Since taking over Castle Howard, a former adventure centre in the Lake District, the environmental charity The Field Studies Council (01743 850674) has introduced new holiday courses and activities. They include Rock Climbing for Women (August 21-23), which costs £120 for full-board and tuition, and a "Using Theatre to Explore the Environment" weekend (£110) in December which includes puppetry, mask-making and clowning.

Hedgehog hospitals and lawnmower museums, Martello towers, shire-horse centres, waterfowl reserves, war rooms and almost 2,000 other suggestions for excursions in Britain and Ireland are listed in



Braze yourself for encounters with otherworldly spectres at Borley Rectory in Norfolk, which is claimed to have 12 ghosts and to be the most haunted house in Britain

Great Days Out 1998 (AA Publishing, £6.99), along with the nitty-gritty of opening times, entry prices and facilities on offer. With August Bank Holiday looming and (let's hope) plenty of summer left, this guide could stave off a boredom crisis.

Spooky Norfolk

The eeriness of the Fen Washes and Norfolk marshes has inspired a clutch of crime and mystery writers including Dorothy L. Sayers, P.D. James and Ruth Rendell. Now the East of England Tourist Board is hoping to cash in the

area's notoriety with a series of self-drive themed itineraries. On an "Every Witch Way You Can" tour, you can try the ducking stool for size in King's Lynn, where Shady Meg was tried by ducking and burnt at the stake in 1596. Black Magic features heavily in the Fen villages, and as recently as Midsummer's Eve 1969, Cliphill received national coverage following attempts to revive Black Mass at the Church of St Mary.

The tour ends at Caneendon, where it is said that every time a stone falls from the church tower, one witch dies and another takes her place. Tamer souls can try another itinerary, "Things That Go Bump in The Night", with liberal doses of ghostly monks, murderers and skeletons, including the site of Britain's most haunted house at Borley, which claims at least 12 ghosts.

For a free leaflet, call the East Made Easy line at the East of England Tourist Board (01473 825609).

Discover more about yourself on a weekend break with the Neal's Yard Agency for Personal Development (07000 783704), which specialises in yoga, holistics and assorted healthy

getaways in the UK and abroad. Throughout August at Runnings Park Hotel in the Malvern Hills, home of the College of Healing, you can take a Health and Relaxation break for £162 based on two sharing, £178 for singles. The weekend includes two nights' full-board accommodation, use of indoor pool and sauna, and a choice of two treatments from a range of aromatherapy, reflexology, flotation or holistic massage. Open-day workshops for those who want to find out more about accredited healing courses are available for £30.

Gypsy picnic treat
For a picnic with a difference, hire a traditional gypsy horse-drawn caravan for a day, and under the guidance of a cartman, clop round the country lanes of Suffolk to a woodland spot where you can sizzle your sausages over a campfire. Caravans can carry up to eight adults, or four adults and six children, and cost £100 for a five-hour jaunt. Call Anglian Activity Breaks (01603 700770).

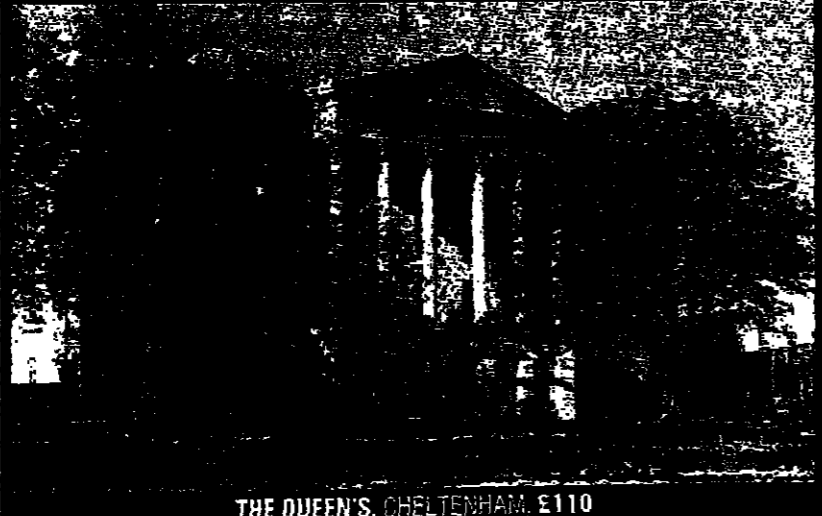
Travel articles appearing in *The Times* since last January are on our Internet site. See "Most Recent" links on <http://the-times.co.uk>

AN EXCLUSIVE OFFER WITH HERITAGE HOTELS THE TIMES

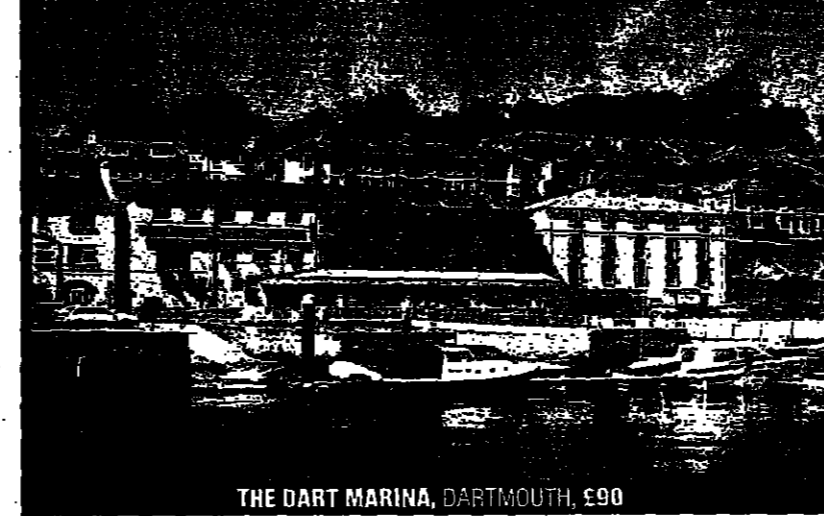
SUMMER BREAKS

2 NIGHTS FOR THE PRICE OF 1

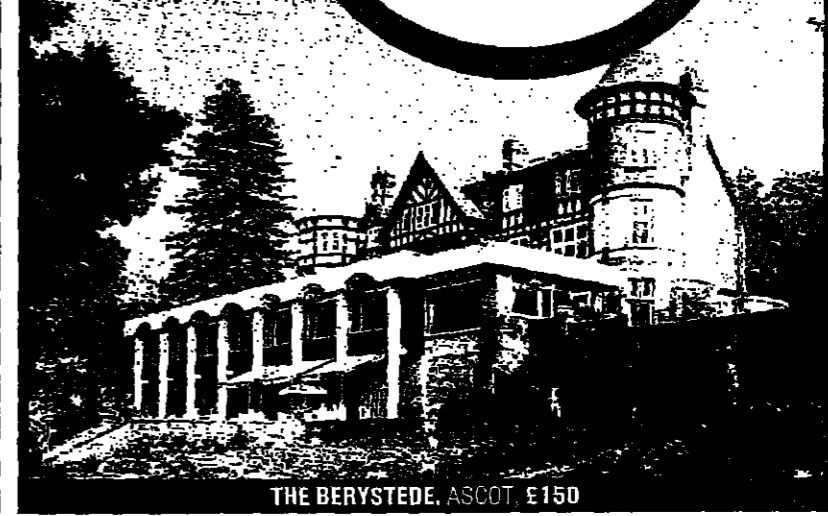
ROOMS FROM £40pp FOR 2 NIGHTS



THE QUEEN'S, CHELTENHAM, £110



THE DART MARINA, DARTMOUTH, £90



THE BERVYSTEDE, ASCOT, £150

Escape to another world where you can relax, have fun and enjoy a slower pace of life with these superb summer offers, exclusive to readers of *The Times*. You can enjoy two nights for the price of one with a discount that is based on two people sharing a double room. Choose from 38 Heritage Hotels in the country, at the seaside or in a beautiful city, and at all of them you will discover service tailored to your individual needs. Simply collect four differently numbered tokens from the seven which have appeared in *The Times* this week and book on the central telephone line. Below, Tokens and completed application form must be presented when you arrive at your hotel. You can enjoy our offer anytime until Wednesday Sept 30, except the August bank holiday weekend, Thursday August 27-Monday August 31, 1998. Bookings can be made from today. **Heritage HOTELS** FOR A BROCHURE, CALL 0345 700 350.

LOCATION	HOTEL	RATE	LOCATION	HOTEL	RATE
SOUTH EAST	The Star Inn	£95 Mid	CENTRAL	The Upper Peaches	£115 w/o
Alfrinton	The Crown	£130 Any	Basington	Wholly Hall	£85 Any
Agurstan	The Baystade	£150 Any	Cheltenham	The Queen's	£110 w/o
Ascut	The Burford Bridge	£118 Any	Shrewsbury	The Power of the Peak	£80 Any
Box Hill	Frimley Hall	£140 Any	Stratford	The Green Dragon	£80 Any
Camberley	The White Horse	£98 Any	Uxbridge	The White Bath	£90 Any
Donnington	The Castle and Ball	£95 Mid	Watlington	The New Bath	£90 Any
Eastbourne	The Compleat Angler	£185 Any	Worcester	The Eastgate	£110 Any
Harlow	The Thames Lodge	£125 w/o	Worcester	The Randolph	£165 Mid
Salisbury	The Castle	£150 w/o	Worcester	The Alveston Manor	£130 Any
Windsor			Worcester	The Bear	£135 Mid
SOUTH WEST			EAST		
Bath	The Bath Spa	£180 Mid	Berkeley	The White Horse	£85 w/o
Bath	The Francis	£170 Mid	Leamington	The Swan	£125 Mid
Bournemouth	The Dart Marina	£90 Mid			
Donnerley	The Luttrell Arms	£95 Mid			
Exeter	The Southgate	£98 w/o	NORTH		
Romsey	The White Horse	£95 w/o	Brasserie	The Swan	£95 Mid
Salisbury	The White Hart	£107 Any	Leeds	The Queen's	£90 w/o
Walsford	The Avonmouth	£118 Mid	Wharfedale	Leaning House	£95 Mid
Worcester	The Wessex	£90 Any			

THE TIMES HERITAGE HOTELS BOOKING CONFIRMATION FORM

After you have pre-booked your hotel, to validate your discount, present this form with four differently numbered tokens when you arrive. To the manager. Please return these forms and tokens to: The Times/Heritage Hotel Offer, PO Box 5082, LU7 7GL.

Title _____ First name _____ Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Day tel _____

1. On which days do you usually buy *The Times*?
Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Don't usually buy *The Times*

2. Which other national daily newspaper(s) do you buy at least once a week?

3. Which national Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy almost always (3-4 copies per month)?

4. Which national Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy quite often (1-2 copies per month)?

If you would prefer not to receive information and offers from organisations currently selected by *The Times* newspapers please tick

HERITAGE HOTELS BOOKING HOTLINE: 0345 404040 AND QUOTE THE TIMES CHANGING TIMES

CHECK-IN

Annual travel cover from £4995 a year.

Call us direct on 0845-600-5454

WESTMINSTER 'The Name To Trust' please call us now on 01483 728989

NEXUS TRAVEL table with columns for destinations like Amsterdam, Bangkok, Sydney, etc.

Travel as many times as you like from £56.85 per year. No need to compromise

GREECE table with columns for destinations like Athens, Thessalonika, etc.

ITALY table with columns for destinations like Rome, Florence, etc.

Australia from £399 return. Flights with leading airlines including British Airways, Cathay Pacific, etc.

Monument Travel table with columns for destinations like London, Paris, etc.

FLIGHT CENTRE table with columns for destinations like London, Paris, etc.

FLIGHT WISE table with columns for destinations like London, Paris, etc.

DENVER non-stop fr £273 Departure Sept/Oct 98

FLIGHTBOOKERS Open 7 days £4 nights Bangkok + £4 nights Phuket £549

Airline Network - the way to go! USA & CANADA, AUSTRALIA & NZ, REST OF THE WORLD

Belgium. It's slightly different. 0870 600 708 Brussels, Bruges or Ghent from only £78

Call Page & Moy for the best selection of escorted Italian tours. But hurry, most tours are already sold out.

- Tuscan Splendour 7 NIGHTS...£399
Tuscany & Rome 6 NIGHTS...£369
Tuscany & Venice 6 NIGHTS...£395
The Sorrento Peninsula 6 NIGHTS...£299
Florence & Rome or Florence & Venice 6 NIGHTS...£399
Venice & Lake Garda 6 NIGHTS...£389
Florence & the Island of Elba 7 NIGHTS...£379
Italian Dolomites 6 NIGHTS...£359
Historic Roman Countryside 4 NIGHTS...£349

CHANNEL CROSSINGS DOVER - CALAIS £109

EUROPEAN SPECIALS

TAILORMADE SAFARIS

EASTERN EUROPE

GENERAL OVERSEAS

GOA

AFRICA EXCLUSIVE

FRANCE

FRANCE

GERMANY

CRUISE & SAIL ABROAD

GREECE

AMAZING CITY BREAK DEALS

AIRPORT PARKING

AFRICA

FRANCE

FRANCE

CRUISE & SAIL ABROAD

GERMANY

GREECE

AMAZING CITY BREAK DEALS PARIS, ROME, VENICE, BRUGES, FLORENCE

AFRICA

FRANCE

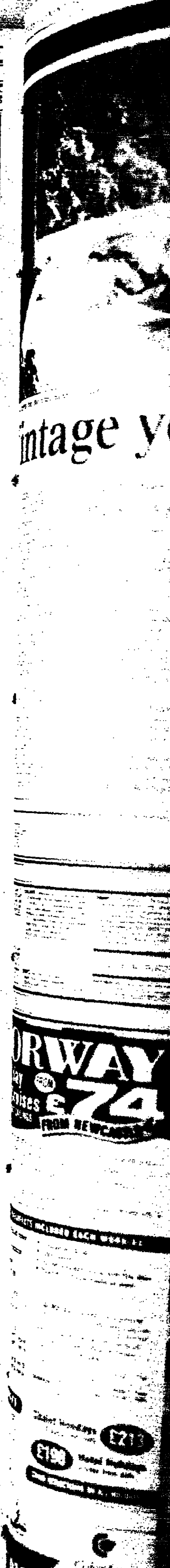
FRANCE

CRUISE & SAIL ABROAD

GERMANY

GREECE

Voted Best Tour Operator by Allitalia Call now for your copy 0116 250 7676



TRAVELLERS' BULLETIN BOARD



No need for the roast battery-chicken experience this year (see Greek beach, centre). A strong pound and bargain deals mean that long-haul destinations such as Malaysia, left, and Mombasa, right, afford better deals than the Med

Vintage year for far-flung destinations

There has never been a better time to travel long-haul, with Malaysia as cheap this summer as Marbella. Your spending money will also go a lot further, write Tom Chesshyre and Steve Keenan

HOLIDAYMAKERS looking for last-minute breaks will do as well to travel to Asia or Africa than the crowded Mediterranean beaches. Two weeks in Malaysia on the deserted beaches of Langkawi will cost £580 during August, compared with £640 self-catering in Turkey. Or a week on the Nile, with all meals included, followed by a week's B&B in a Luxor Hotel will cost just £469 - more than £100 cheaper than two weeks fighting for towel space on the Costa Blanca in Spain. Package prices to the Mediterranean are also rising. Thomas Cook recently reported prices have gone up 4 per cent in recent weeks (Week-end, July 13) as demand outstrips supply. Malaysia, on the other hand, is empty, says Thomas Cook. As have Bali, Kenya and Egypt. The opportunity to spend two weeks in Africa or Asia for less than continental Europe has been made possible this summer due to an extraordinary confluence of events worldwide. Record demand for holidays in Europe means little availability. Long-haul destina-

tions in southeast Asia have been hit by economic collapse, while Egypt and Kenya have still to recover from political turmoil and terrorist attacks. South Africa and Florida are also cheaper to visit due to local problems. The other reason for going long-haul this summer is that your spending money will go considerably further in, say, Thailand than in Spain. Here, we look at the reasons why 1998 will probably be remembered as the best year ever to fly long-haul and avoid the crowded beaches of the Mediterranean.

EGYPT Since the massacre of 58 holidaymakers by Islamic terrorists at Luxor last November, demand for holiday packages to Egypt has fallen by up to 90 per cent. Holiday prices have dropped dramatically - by as much as 40-50 per cent - and a discount shopping festival in Cairo and the Red Sea re-

Table with columns: LONG HAUL v SHORT HAUL, FROM, PRICE, COMPANY. Lists travel deals for various destinations like Egypt, Malaysia, South Africa, Kenya, Thailand, Greece, Portugal, France, Turkey, Spain, Greece, Portugal, France.

sort of Hurgada over the next fortnight will make staying in Egypt even cheaper. Shop prices and hotel rates are being reduced by up to 50 per cent. INDONESIA President Suharto's overthrow this summer, the collapse of the rupiah

and the adverse effects of haze caused by forest fires in Borneo last year have made Indonesia a very cheap place to go on holiday. The number of tourists travelling to Indonesia has plunged by about 60 per cent this year, while the value of the rupiah has fallen by about 80 per cent since last August. The

pound is now almost twice as strong as before. Indonesia's national airline, Garuda, this week gave free domestic tickets to anyone arriving on an international flight. Holidaymakers arriving in Bali also received a free night in a hotel, a meal, a tour and entry to recreational parks.

KENYA Kenya's tourism sector is still bleeding a year after ethnic and political violence around coastal resorts caused a collapse in the number of visitors. Of the 22 luxury tourist hotels at the upmarket resort of Malindi, 17 are closed. In Mombasa and the neighbouring resort of Diani, hotels report occupancy rates of just 15 per cent. From a peak of 5,000 arrivals to the Kenyan coast on air charters every week last year, there is now a trickle of just 400 to 500 per week.

VIETNAM Hotels in Ho Chi Minh City are one-third full, with arrivals in the first half of 1998 down by more than 10 per cent to 800,000 visitors. Some smaller hotels had occupancy rates of just 10 to 20 per cent, and major hotels have also suffered. About 974 out of 13,626 hotel rooms in the city have been forced to shut, say local newspaper reports.

THAILAND Thailand has been the first of the southeast Asian countries to benefit from increased tourism demand since the economic crash in the region last year. Tourist figures for the first six months of 1998 were up by a sixth. However, Britons are still finding their pound worth 70 per cent more than last year.

SOUTH AFRICA Economic problems in South Africa mean that the rand has fallen dramatically in value against the pound. At the beginning of June, the exchange rate was about eight rand to the pound; now the rate is about 10 to the pound. British tourists now get twice as much for their money than they did four years ago. Flight prices from Britain have also fallen, as some airlines now fly to South Africa.

FLORIDA The rape of a British tourist in Florida last month has resulted in a slowdown in bookings. Packages that last year sold for about £600 are now being reduced to £400 for departures in August.

TO ADVERTISE CALL: 0171 481 0889 (TRADE) FAX: 0171 481 7824

TRAVEL

TO ADVERTISE CALL: 0171 481 4000 (PRIVATE) FAX: 0171 782 7799

ITALY section with travel agencies and services listed.

PORTUGAL section with travel agencies and services listed.

SPAIN section with travel agencies and services listed.

SPECIAL INTEREST section with travel agencies and services listed.

U.K. HOLIDAYS section with travel agencies and services listed.

CORNWALL & DEVON section with travel agencies and services listed.

EAST ANGLIA section with travel agencies and services listed.

SCOTLAND section with travel agencies and services listed.

OVERSEAS TRAVEL section with travel agencies and services listed.

NORWAY 3 & 4 day Mini Cruises £74. Includes details of Color Line ferries, departure schedules, and contact information.

ALGARVE section with travel agencies and services listed.

LA MANCHA section with travel agencies and services listed.

JOURNEY TO AMERICA section with travel agencies and services listed.

HELPFUL HOLIDAYS section with travel agencies and services listed.

GO NOW! section with travel agencies and services listed.

RECOMMENDED COTTAGES section with travel agencies and services listed.

LAKE DISTRICT section with travel agencies and services listed.

SWITZERLAND section with travel agencies and services listed.

OKAVANGO TOURS & SAFARIS section with travel agencies and services listed.

TURKEY section with travel agencies and services listed.

USA & CANADA section with travel agencies and services listed.

COTSWOLDS section with travel agencies and services listed.

LONDON section with travel agencies and services listed.

WALES section with travel agencies and services listed.

RUSSIA section with travel agencies and services listed.

INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS section with travel agencies and services listed.

USA & CANADA section with travel agencies and services listed.

ACTIVITY HOLIDAYS section with travel agencies and services listed.

DORSET, HANTS, & L.O.W. section with travel agencies and services listed.

NORTHUMBRIA section with travel agencies and services listed.

PEAK DISTRICT section with travel agencies and services listed.

SPAIN section with travel agencies and services listed.

U.K. HOLIDAYS section with travel agencies and services listed.

CORNWALL & DEVON section with travel agencies and services listed.

HELPFUL HOLIDAYS section with travel agencies and services listed.

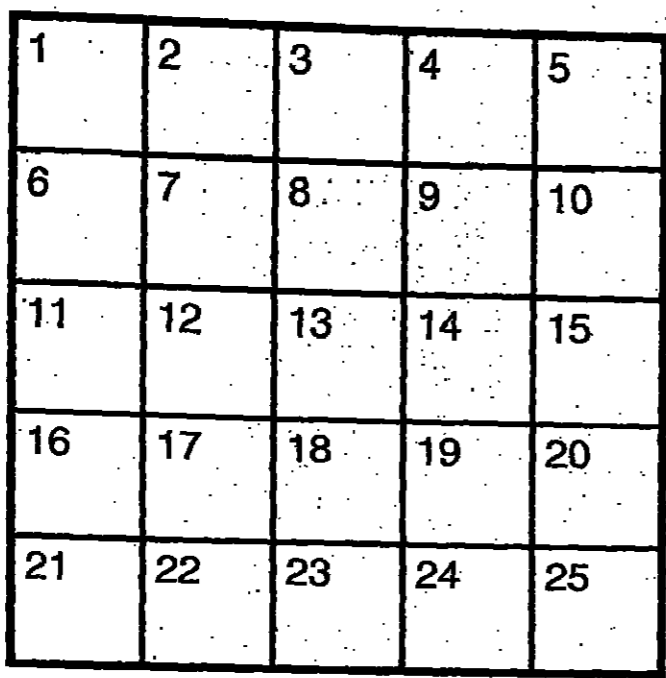
SCOTLAND section with travel agencies and services listed.

YORKSHIRE section with travel agencies and services listed.

YORKSHIRE section with travel agencies and services listed.

THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

No. 3473: Chip Ruftoc by Mr Lemon



LISTENER CROSSWORD No 3473 in association with Waterstones

NAME ADDRESS

Cut out and send the completed crossword and coupon above to The Listener Crossword No 3473, 63 Green Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL3 4LE, by Thursday, August 13.

Waterstones advertisement featuring a book cover and promotional text.

SOGNWPWGENPIGNKGGZPHUSRCIOHTFHSTIUSRUAXHEKNMVDVYACTVYVYV-RHGRLIQRKHC-FBGNHEEAYHBNH.

In this version of the well-known code square, the grid is the code square. A word descriptive of the theme has been placed symmetrically in the grid...

Grid with letters and numbers for the code square puzzle.

- CLUES: 1 Male academic is the one seeking pleasure with idle fancy for constant... 2 Whisky island almost pardoned for ruining good vine...

Grid with letters and numbers for the solution to No. 3470.

Solution and notes for No. 3470: Run Journey by Aragon. Theme: 'The night we went to Birmingham by way of Beaulieu'...

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

IN strong club systems, One Club is the strongest opening bid. If the opponents keep quiet that provides a good base for constructive auctions...

This example is from the final of the 1998 Olympiad, in which France beat the USA.

Bridge hand diagram showing cards for North-South and East-West.

Room 1: USA North-South. W: Paron, N: Wolff, E: Charis, S: Hamman. Pass: 6H, All Pass.

As you can see, Seven Hearts is laydown. Hamman's opening bid of One Club showed a hand of 17 points or more...

WORD ANSWERS section with answers to various puzzles.

CHESS

by Raymond Keene

ONE of the great triumphs of British chess was scored by grandmaster Michael Adams when he shared first place in the elite tournament at Dortmund...

Chess board diagram showing a game position.

White: Alexander Beliavsky, Black: Michael Adams. Dortmund 1998 English Opening. 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 c5 4 Nf3 cd4 5 Nxd4 Bb4+ 6 Bg2 Qb6 7 Bxb4 Qxb4+ 8 Nc3 0-0

True to his style Adams does not snatch either of the gambit pawns on offer. Indeed, after 8... Qxd4 White has an enormous choice of attacking possibilities...

Chess board diagram showing a winning move.

COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

by Tim Wapshott

BEHIND CLOSED doors at the three Japanese superpowers in console gaming - Messrs Nintendo, Sony and Sega - plans are being drawn up for a new round of supremacy battles.

Advertisement for the Game Boy digital camera, featuring an image of the device and a person using it.

duce trick shots - mirrored, squished, miniaturised; multiplied and so on. You can make montages and 4-shot panoramic views.

NEW SOFTWARE

Advertisement for 'Tender Loving Care' software, featuring a portrait of a man and descriptive text.

SOLUTION TO JUMBO 176

Large crossword grid with words filled in, including 'HOTSPRINGS', 'LITERATI', 'CASELAW', etc.

53 من رمضان

MODERN MANNERS

by John Morgan

Send your queries to Morgan's Modern Manners, The Times, Weekend, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN

Q Recently, while in Beijing, I was aware of an exaggerated version of a practice which I have noticed becoming more common in Britain. When dining out in company, the waiters removed plates (and sometimes cutlery, glasses and cups) from individuals almost as soon as they had finished, sometimes while the last mouthful was still being chewed, and before the rest of the party had completed the course. This now seems to happen more frequently in British restaurants. Can you please advise on the correct procedure? — Roy Lee-Faulkner, Stalybridge, Cheshire.

television. After all, you could do that at home. I would feel I was being such a rude host."

Q When eating pâté served with toast and often a small salad garnish, it is normal, I think, to spread the pâté on the toast, but I have noticed recently that it is sometimes eaten using a knife and fork. This makes it easier to eat the garnish. Is this acceptable? — Name and address withheld.

A No: although fancy terrines are often eaten with a knife and fork, or preferably just the latter, pâté is always put on to bits of toast or bread that are first broken into small, bite-size pieces. On no account should the pâté be spread flat across a piece of toast like children's jam sandwiches. A garnish, as its name suggests, is intended to be decorative and should not be eaten. However, should you find it irresistible, then it can be eaten with the fork held in the right hand, unless it is something like a radish in which case the left hand may be used.

A The proper way of doing things, whether at a restaurant or at home, is that absolutely nobody's plate (or indeed any other eating or drinking implement) is removed until the last member of the party has finished their final mouthful and put down their knife and fork. The Beijing method you describe is rude and presumptuous and increasingly prevalent in restaurants whose aim appears to be to cajole its customers into eating, paying and going as soon as possible.

Q I am buying a signet ring featuring our family's crest for my son. It is my understanding that this type of ring is always worn on the smallest finger of the left hand. The Jeweller where we are purchasing the ring, says that it can be worn on any finger but ideally on the third finger of the right hand. Who is correct? — Harold Farquharson, Perthshire.



A You are. Signet rings are always seen on the little finger of the left hand. This is both customary and practical because traditionally they were used for sealing letters as the small finger of the left hand was conveniently placed to make an impression on the wax. More aggressive rings are worn on the middle digits.

Q Further to the question and answer published on July 4, I am inquiring as to how to react as host when guests ask for the television to be switched on so that they can watch a particular programme. They often take offence if I offer to tape it for them and then lend them the tape. If they are interested in a particular piece of information, is perusing teletext with the sound muted a reasonable compromise? — Bernard Barret, Ilford, Essex.

Q When visiting family friends I am not sure whether it is proper behaviour to use the bidet in the guest cloakroom. At home it is a force of habit. If it is acceptable to use the bidet, should I request a towel or would this embarrass my hosts? — Barry Day, Thames Ditton, Surrey.

A If a host provides sanitary facilities they are surely to be used unless guests are told otherwise. As far as your towel dilemma is concerned, I suspect your friends would be rather more bemused if you did not ask for one.

Q In September, two of my work colleagues are to marry and my wife and I have been invited to an evening reception. Although I have known the couple for several years and are good friends as far as work goes, we do not socialise or have any contact outside the work environment. My wife and the couple have never met. We are not invited to the wedding ceremony and I would like to know, without appearing "tight-fisted", if it would be bad manners for us not to take a wedding gift to the evening reception? — T.M. Gabriel, Herne Bay, Kent.

A I would not take a present to the party but I would certainly send something. To give nothing, as you suggest yourself, would appear "tight-fisted" and poor form. As you have accepted the invitation, you should be aware that nuptial niceties expect that all those who attend a wedding (even if it is just the reception) should make some contribution to the bride and groom's future material comfort. The author is associate editor of GQ

A Unless guests are staying rather than just visiting, I would be tempted never to invite them again. However, for the time being, I would reiterate your excessively noble offer of making a video. Then say beamingly, but with an underlying note of somewhat genteel confusion: "Oh no, I would not dream of leaving you to watch



WORD WATCHING

by Philip Howard

LOOGAN

- a. An ancient manuscript
- b. A fool
- c. An area of calm sea water

POLYP

- a. A small sea animal
- b. A depressed friend
- c. A point of vulnerability

NYUCK

- a. A type of fibre
- b. Expression of disgust
- c. Antifungal substance

LIBIDINAL

- a. A person of confused sexuality
- b. Composed of foess
- c. To be full of libido

Answers on page 35

TWO BRAINS

by Raymond Keene

ACCORDING to the magazine of Mensa, the high-IQ society, pollution may reduce the intelligence of millions of people. Research by Dr Christopher Williams, of London University, indicates that one in ten British children are affected.

Question 1

Match the pairs: Laura, Beatrice, Lady Hamilton, Theodora, Lois Lane, Nelson, Justinian, Dante, Clarke Kent, Petrarch.

Question 2

Try this: Place a rook on an empty 64-square chessboard at corner square h1 (A): place a rook on an empty 64-square chessboard at central square e4 (B): place a queen on an empty 64-square chessboard at central square e5 (C). Work out how many squares each piece controls and calculate (A-B)+C.

Answers on page 35

CROSS WORDS

by Brian Greer

A big news event here in the United States not long ago was the death of Roy Rogers. Do you remember "the singing cowboy"? Recently, I edited a reference to Trigger, his beloved horse (whom Rogers had stuffed when he died) on the grounds that younger solvers were unlikely to have heard of him.

Among the multitude of judgments I make in editing, I try to remember that, while there are still some solvers who started in the 1920s, it is important to consider also the incoming cohort now in their own twenties, or even younger: I would not expect this generation to know about the radio shows of my youth.

Dick Barton, Special Agent Paul Temple. Journey into Space. Likewise, it is reasonable to expect younger people to know about Biggles, Rupert Bear and William! I am even leery about references to the film *ET* because it is nearly 20 years old, but perhaps that is being overcautious. Several correspondents have lamented what they perceive as a decrease in the number of literary references, and this is a matter I will discuss at a later date. My sense is that there is a much smaller canon these days with which one can reasonably expect the majority of our solvers, from 20 years old to 80, to be familiar. How many younger readers now, then, are familiar with the works of John Buchan, A.J. Cronin, H.E. Bates?

Slang and other manifestations of popular culture come and go. I remember a rudimentary form of dancing called the twist. Young men with a certain dress code were called "Teddy Boys". Forgotten otherwise, such ephemera retain a ghostly existence in the virtual reality of dictionaries and crossword puzzles, where "it" is still SA (sex appeal) and an "unruly adolescent" is still a "Ted". At the risk of reducing the nostalgic enjoyment of senior solvers, I try to reduce, if not eliminate, such anachronistic crosswordese.

The writer is crossword editor of *The Times*



READERS are invited to suggest what was said when Norma Major and her future daughter-in-law Emma Noble got together.

This picture will appear again next week with an entry chosen from those submitted. Send your "speech bubble" suggestions — only on postcards please — to: PictureLine, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The Editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, August 5.

Last week's winning caption (left) was submitted by Lisa Dawson, of Putney, London.



QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"In an effort to achieve prompt resolution of this entire matter the President will voluntarily provide his testimony." — President Clinton's lawyer after agreeing that his client should appear before a grand jury.

"If the last 15 months have taught me anything it is that the whole Cabinet — especially the Chancellor — must share common beliefs on the biggest of all reforms." — Frank Field attacks Gordon

Brown after resigning from the government.

"It is hard work to create prosperity for Britain's hard-working families that I am interested in, not pompous titles." — Peter Mandelson on jettisoning the title President of the Board of Trade after his promotion.

"The more I corrected the aircraft in one direction, the more it continued to go in the opposite direction." — Louis Blériot who

crashed into a lake moments after take-off trying to repeat his grandfather's 1909 maiden flight across the Channel.

"I am delighted. I would be a funny granny if I was not." — Mrs David Edelman on her daughter Melanie Cable-Alexander's baby, reportedly fathered by Lord Snowdon.

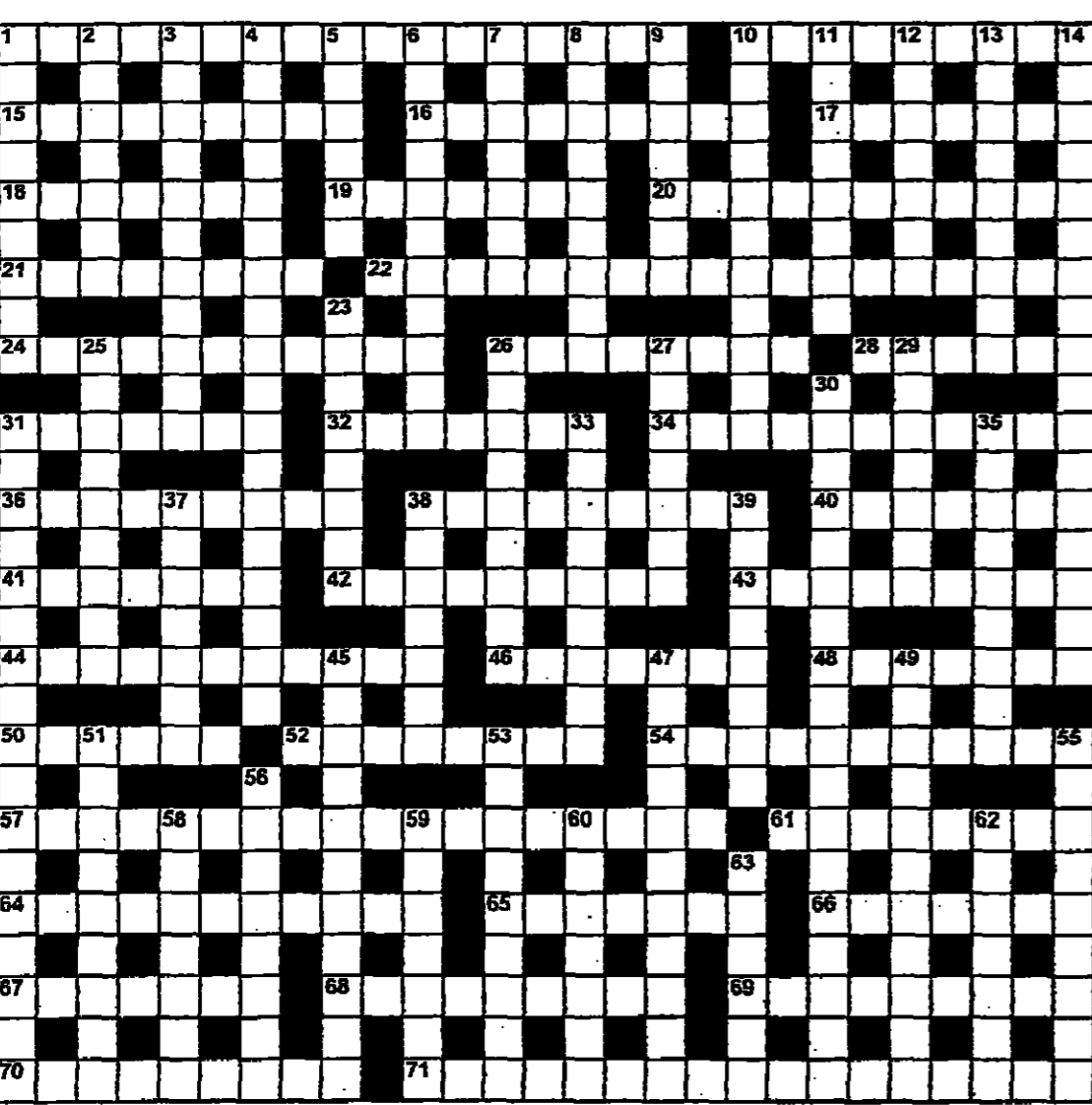
"I'm completely fed up. It's impossible to continue under conditions where we're all

treated like animals." — World No. 1 cyclist Laurent Jalabert walks out of the Tour de France over the drug abuse row.

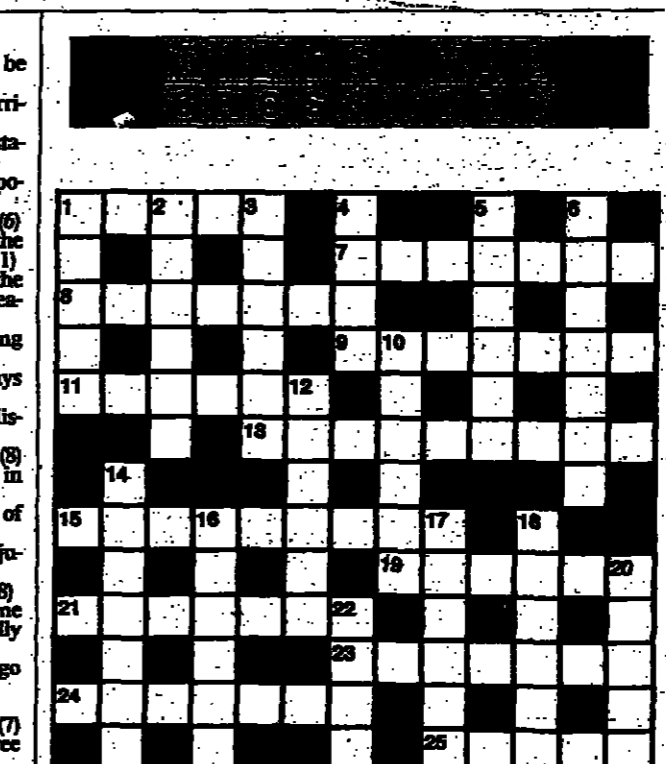
"Did he sleep in his helmet? Could he have? Did he have a bad neck?" — Curator of the Ancient House Museum in Thorford, Norfolk, after the discovery of papers showing a man trekked 30,000 miles over six years in 1908 wearing an iron mask and pushing a pram for a \$100,000 wager, he never received.



The prize for the first correct solution to be opened will be a collection of five Oxford University Press titles, the world's most trusted reference books, valued at more than £100. Included are *The Oxford English Reference Dictionary* and *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Quotations*. Entries should be sent to: Jumbo Crossword 178, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN to arrive by August 15. The name of the winner will be published on August 15.



- ACROSS**
- 1 Halls in which you'll find just lools on benches (11,6)
 - 10 Naval dances with ship prone to become unruly (9)
 - 15 Namely, one who seeks retribution, a person wanting scraps (9)
 - 16 Chaos in West with good, man keeping opposing sides apart before order ceases (9)
 - 17 Heavy defeats bringing acts of retreat (7)
 - 18 Try a couple of typists initially, including one from secretarial agency (7)
 - 19 A friend of the upper classes, right dilettante (7)
 - 20 At home, with gross posture, losing time and lacking appreciation (11)
 - 21 Unordained females with yen to be in order when given sign (8)
 - 22 Changing the line of argument — digging oneself into a hole (8,4,6)
 - 24 Obsolete laws in an alphabet long gone (4,7)
 - 26 Forward-looking type makes wife face almost when duke comes round (8)
 - 28 Dad, not in mint condition, took a breather (6)
 - 31 Bag endless game, having moved quickly (7)
 - 32 Encouragement favoured by imperialist, reportedly (7)
 - 34 Burns could be careerist's initial object of academic study (5,9)
 - 36 Revealed: journalists admitting wickedness outside wicked place (9)
 - 38 Dry, heated nuts, free from moisture (9)
 - 40 Reasoning, yet inconsistent ultimately (7)
 - 41 Checks report of wet weather — shame! (5,2)
 - 42 Firm misapprehension no one is leading intrigue (7)
 - 43 Guzzled as public school head, we hear (9)
 - 44 Authority conveyed by letters (11)
 - 46 Men's official's preferred candidate for victory (4,3)
 - 48 Profligate boy under into dish (7)
 - 50 Patron proves to be right in court (6)
 - 52 Sit across street perched against wobbly ladder (8)
 - 54 Turn of work by book-producer, exceptionally fascinating person (11)
 - 57 Is laid insured as site falls apart, bringing illnesses to factory workers (10,8)
 - 61 Repeated serving of fruit, its said, produces a serious complaint (8)
 - 64 Cold in head nasty in bleak season? Wrap up warm in this (11)
 - 65 He is finally to jump, the one who gets away (7)
 - 66 Errant Cain died without honour, as a wanderer (7)
 - 67 Conditioning at home driving good out (7)
 - 68 Queen entering club's restaurant (9)
 - 69 Operation with dicy cutter taking time (9)
 - 70 Conductor went on bus, maybe, having got chosen first (9)
 - 71 Face insult again with no thought of retaliation (4,3,5,5)
- DOWN**
- 1 After false claims was first to be given wrong designation (9)
 - 2 Nasty hugs on rilly, oddly horrible (7)
 - 3 Hot vessel needs to be more stable, I fancy (5,6)
 - 4 Like a trio lined up across the political spectrum (5,4,3,6)
 - 5 After short article peruse yarn (6)
 - 6 Say, heartless niggard across the way may become a comrade (11)
 - 7 First person — emphatically, the devil's a mischievous creature (7)
 - 8 Control the others gathering around coach (9)
 - 9 Operating at court in more ways than one (7)
 - 10 Is e.g. hormone possibly a fat-disperser? (11)
 - 11 Ray taking the last car or train (9)
 - 12 Father dog awkwardly jammed in landing-stage (7)
 - 13 Swinger, making one think of grandfather's time? (9)
 - 14 Incomplete statement defining judicial punishment? (9,8)
 - 23 Like a table used by chemists (8)
 - 25 Repetition of literature by one gaining an advantage externally (9)
 - 26 A light attachment that may go off with a snap (5,4)
 - 27 Give up burden (7)
 - 29 Excellent — sound and solvent (7)
 - 30 Hospital employee expands three separate points (5,5,5)
 - 31 Be snubbed by woman and turn out useless as a chess commentator? (5,5,2,5)
 - 33 Team's is to have girl? It's not what matters most (4,5)
 - 35 Honest worker not sinister in activity (5,4)
 - 37 Greek character in pose that's silly, about Latin (7)
 - 38 Before appearance of Miss Woodhouse, cover up problem (7)
 - 39 In the finish measure must be clearly articulated (8)
 - 45 Let Brian act in such a way as to be snubbed (11)
 - 47 Mum hugging small son with serenity, as you might say? That's great achievement (11)
 - 49 Am I appearing phony with university degree, not using normal logic (11)
 - 51 Form by document concerned with oral appliance (9)
 - 53 Girl poet may be noted in the high street (9)
 - 55 Special US ticket issued with what sounds like double control (9)
 - 56 Musical sequence played in opera pie (8)
 - 58 Cathedral official starts to store all choral recordings, including service tapes (7)
 - 59 Errant worker outside room is temporarily inactive (7)
 - 60 Damnable old wretches interrupting performance (7)
 - 62 Call players off in final stage of competition (7)
 - 63 Cloth that's neat, short, placed on bed (8)



No 1473

ACROSS

- 1 Terrible beauty born poet (5)
- 7 (Males) progress (7)
- 8 A unit of heat (7)
- 9 Feebleness, infirmity (7)
- 11 Gullet (6)
- 13 Carroty; half-hearted (effort) (9)
- 15 One going on all fours (9)
- 19 Lion's den man (6)
- 21 Red bits of US flag (7)
- 22 Misdemeanour (7)
- 24 A flower, fair, see (snag) (7)
- 25 Large (esp. US) farzo (5)

DOWN

- 1 Pleasure craft (5)
- 2 Glamorous appeal (6)
- 3 Exceed; a risk of middle-age (6)
- 4 Head of kitchen (4)
- 5 At mercy of wind and waves (6)
- 6 Power source: an artillery unit (7)
- 10 Woken up (6)
- 12 Right to keep job (6)
- 14 Food store, (college) shop; tending of dairy produce (7)
- 16 Chauffeur; a crab (6)
- 17 Neatly dressed (6)
- 18 The fiddle (6)
- 20 Stagger; the abandoned left leg (5)
- 22 Box; a mineral (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1472

ACROSS: 5 Endure 7 Arthur 9 Follister 11 Mitt 12 Paper 13 Unrock 15 Advert 17 Defist 19 Mate

DOWN: 1 Keep up 2 Beas 3 Warren 4 Writ 6 Dilapidated 8 Hair-raising 10 Sings 14 Cadge 16 Reheat 18 Turkey 19 Mare 21 Tube

THE TIMES BOOKSHOP

NEW TIMES CROSSWORD TITLES NOW AVAILABLE

The Times Two Crossword (200p) The Times Crossword Book 20 (200p) The Times Crossword Book 21 (200p) The Times Crossword Book 22 (200p) The Times Crossword Book 23 (200p) The Times Crossword Book 24 (200p) The Times Crossword Book 25 (200p)